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COMMENTARY

TOMORROW'S JEW IN THE MAKING

New Forces Reshape a Centuries-Old Ideal

ERNST SIMON

IF ONE traces Jewish educational ideals back to the source documents of the Tannaitic period at the beginning of

For centuries the personality type which Jewish teaching held up as an ideal was that of the life-long student (and practitioner) of the Torah, Israel's code for moral living. In recent decades, under the impact of the emancipation and of the evolving life of Palestine, a new ideal arose to challenge the traditional mold—the pioneer. And now war and catastrophe have flung up still another, perhaps an ominous, folk model—the militant partisan. Today an image of the ideal Jew is being forged which will deeply affect not only the future culture of Palestine, but also the ideals projected by Jewish educational institutions in the United States. ERNST SIMON here attempts to give us the perspective for understanding and controlling what may lie ahead as Jews seek to shape the aims of Jewish life in the contemporary world; and Dr. Simon suggests the possibility of a new Jewish ideal of the "whole man" which will harmonize past and present. Dr. Simon, one of the most respected Jewish scholars and religious personalities of our time, is chairman of the department of education at the Hebrew University in Palestine, and is the author of numerous works in German and Hebrew on philosophy, literature, and education. Dr. Simon was born in Berlin in 1899 and earned his doctorate at the University of Heidelberg. From 1923 to 1925 he was co-editor (with Martin Buber) of the monthly *Der Jude*. He is at present in this country as visiting professor of education at the Jewish Theological Seminary and its Teachers Institute.

the Christian era, one inevitably meets many statements stressing the value of manual labor. Some of these formulations, through the *Sayings of the Fathers*, have penetrated deep into Jewish national consciousness: e.g., the warning not to busy oneself with the Torah without at the same time engaging in manual work, and the praise of a life synthesizing both forms of activity. Stories about great teachers of the Mishnah like Rabbi Johanan, who was a shoemaker, and Rabbi Joshua, who seems to have been a blacksmith, have reinforced this point. In popular works on the subject, especially those with an apologetic purpose, such stories are often represented as irrefutable proof of a generally accepted personality ideal embodying a harmonious compromise between manual labor and study. Modern Zionism, with its stress on "normalizing" Jewish life and reestablishing an almost mystical "relationship with the soil," has laid great stress on this element of the tradition.

Yet these same aphorisms and stories can be explained with at least equal plausibility as arguments against the prevailing aristocratic monopoly in the educational field enjoyed by the ruling group that constituted the court of the *Nasi*, the "prince" of the Law. Many of the scholars of his circle are represented as men of independent means;

and we find also the general advice to a scholar to choose a "clean and easy trade." Statements of this sort, which are harder to use for apologetic purposes, seem more compatible with a Hellenistic environment.

The Talmudic Jews of the Hellenistic period, it is true, did not, like the Greeks, regard manual labor as a positive disgrace, but neither did the Talmudic Jews make work an end in itself, a "profession" or a "calling" in the Lutheran-Calvinist sense, which would have been too much of an anachronism; they seem to have observed a peculiar middle road between the two. Indeed, no concept could have been more incomprehensible to the Talmudic and medieval *talmid hacham* ("the disciple of the wise," which is the traditional title of a Talmudic scholar—the Hebrew plural is *talmidei hachamim*) than the modern Palestinian "religion of labor." The reverse, the "labor of religion," would have been more intelligible to him, from the ancient until the most modern times, and he would have expressed it in a single Hebrew word: *avodah*. The profound secularization of Jewish life that is taking place today can be read in the history of this Hebrew word, which formerly meant "divine worship" and now means "labor."

THE fact is that for nearly two thousand years the Talmudic scholars in varying roles and shapes have represented a kind of Jewish spiritual aristocracy that was usually identical with the ruling group within the Jewish community, or at least in close contact with that group. The authoritative exegesis of Torah—law—which in general provided the practical basis for the internal life of the Jewish community, gave the *talmid hacham* a position of power whose primacy, although sometimes partially and temporarily infringed upon by more worldly offices—such as that of Jewish fiscal agent in the Spanish period—remained intact up to the beginning of the Jewish Enlightenment.

But his position of power was only part of the role and image of the *talmid hacham*. It may account for the hard traits in his

profile: his severe, and sometimes even ruthless determination to arrive at a legally valid decision, his sharpness in discussion (for it was a question of applying God's law on earth), and his disregard and sometimes even contempt of the unlearned, with whom intermarriage or even companionship at table was considered inadvisable—but, as we have said, this was only *one* element in him, although an organic and indispensable one. Another and no less essential trait was the *talmid hacham's* devotion to the study of Holy Scripture for its own sake, immersion in its dialectical ecstasies, delight in the abundance of threads uniting the seemingly separate topics discussed in the Talmudic tracts.

His main characteristic is the unique concept that the study of Divine Law is in itself the highest of all religious duties because it leads the Jew on God's ways and teaches him how to fulfill God's commandments. Therefore, this theory is not only a theory of practice—like the wisdom of the Stoics—but a practice itself, similar to the contemporary *Gnosis*, though of a more rational and less mystical tincture: he who has always studied the laws governing Temple offerings, for instance, will know how to put them into practice when the Redeemer comes and reestablishes the Temple; and he who occupies himself with the laws of martyrdom, even in times of peace, will know how to die as a Jew in the hour of persecution and self-sacrifice.

The two attitudes—the legal-political one and the studious one—were not necessarily combined in one and the same person, but as a rule they were. At any rate, the synthesis of the two produced the complete, ideal type: an active life constantly drawing its justification from the contemplative life; a contemplative life always concerned with its relationship to active life. At all times in Jewish history when the domination of the Torah remained unbroken in principle, the representatives of the "learning for the sake of fulfillment" were at least always assured of a living: this in more recent times was indicated by the relatively good dowries

that the best yeshiva students could count on, and the support they received at the tables of their fathers-in-law for two or three years after marriage.

Yet this very example, with its connotations of the poverty and musty pettiness of the East European small town of the 19th century, is a symptom of the processes that put an end to the position of the talmid hacham as the bearer of the highest pedagogic ideal and made possible the emergence of a new ideal type of Jew. After the Enlightenment had begun its work of liberation and destruction, the talmid hacham, along with other elements of specifically Jewish culture, was secularized and transferred into the sphere of the Central European bourgeoisie that was the actual focus of Jewish emancipation in the age of capitalism. The former Talmudic student became now a member of the free professions and, at the top of the intellectual hierarchy, a university teacher. The sociological index for this "transfer" is the high price that the young Jewish university teacher (the *Privatdozent*) could soon command in the rich middle-class "marriage market."

And so one element of reality after another slipped from the enfeebled hands of the old talmid hacham: in the East he was thrust back into a wretched existence, restricted to a theoretical life whose practical implications had become meaningless both to the expanding middle class and the proletarian masses; in the West he had undergone a metamorphosis and been divested of all Jewish content, to become a teacher of foreign ideas. Thus it was that the Zionist movement and even its non-political precursor, the Russian Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion), were able to realize their aims only by creating a new type of man that at first sight seemed to stand in complete and conscious contrast to the talmid hacham: the *halutz*, the pioneer of labor on the hard and stony soil of Palestine.

THE *halutz* is a secular man. He places his confidence in his own activity, the work of his own hands. His pathos is twofold and

unified, human and Jewish. Seen from the human point of view, he is the young Jew who takes a deep breath of the free air of concrete reality and, shaking off the dust of books and the burden of traditions, sets to work. From the Jewish point of view, he is the man who does not regard the liberation and redemption of his own people as a mere by-product of the emancipation of the proletariat—as did another new type of Jew, the Jewish non-Zionist socialist—but looks to winning freedom by collective national effort.

The *halutz* becomes the chief embodiment of the reconstruction of Palestine, the volunteer in the "legion of labor," a settler in workers' cooperatives and community settlements, which he learns to defend, rifle in hand; he builds the city of Tel Aviv, Jewish quarters in other cities, and the various forms of agricultural colonies. Although, like any ideal type, he constitutes only a minority, if a rather considerable one, he becomes for almost half a century the central figure in Jewish pedagogic effort in Palestine itself and, to an even greater degree, in Zionist propaganda in the Diaspora. In this almost monopolistic position there are great opportunities and considerable danger: the opportunity of an elite to realize a revolution in the personal lives of its members, and the danger that all who fall short of this high aim may remain for the rest of their lives without a guiding ideal. The opportunity may be greater in Palestine and the danger greater in the Diaspora—especially in the United States, where the various *halutz* movements have so far-reached only a small minority of Jewish and Zionist youth, while the vast majority of the inactive are unfortunately ready to boast of "what we have accomplished" in speaking of the deeds of *others*, and so to neglect their own Jewish education and learning.

We have said that "at first sight" this new type is directly opposed to the talmid hacham. On closer examination, however, one finds remarkable similarities in the structure of the two ideal types, perhaps the only original types that the Jewish people has

produced in the course of its long history.

The martyred Josef Carlebach, late Chief Rabbi of Hamburg, once characterized the Talmud as "a world without pathos." Though this is hardly true of its purely literary content—consider, for example, the "flower garden of the Aggadah," as Heine called it—it does apply to the very process of Talmudic learning, at least in the last centuries. The talmid hacham of the old type attached little value to the unsystematic and unformulated philosophy of religion to be found in the Aggadah or to its poetry; he immersed himself solely in the "dry" dialectic and juridical casuistry of the Law. His world was indeed a world of prose with all the seriousness and obligations it imposes. The Law was law and not symbol; the dogma was not an object of a formulated catechism or of religious instruction, but the almost secret, chastely concealed fundament and source of daily and hourly obedience.

From a formal point of view, the world of the halutz is actually very similar. The present enormous misunderstanding between Jewish Orthodoxy and its rabbinical representatives on the one hand, and the great majority of the young Palestinian pioneers on the other, arises from the fact that the rabbis regard only that sphere of public, common life which is regulated by religious law as authentically Jewish, and look on all those who withdraw from it as renegades. Applied to the lands of the Diaspora, there may be a limited truth in such an interpretation; but for Palestine it is certainly false.

IN PALESTINE the Jewish worker has created his own acknowledged and legitimate common life; or, in Talmudic terms, he possesses his own *parhessia* (public life) with its own legal structure. The Jew in Palestine who has turned away from the religious law is not simply a "slave who is happy in a state of lawlessness," as he is still occasionally called in rabbinical polemics. Most frequently he is a man who has exchanged religious legality for a legality of another sort, for social and national laws that he carries out with the same exacti-

tude (and when necessary evades by the same sophisticated arguments). Precisely these occasional evasions—as, for example, the evasion of the regulation against outsiders' working in a *moshav ovdim* (cooperative workers' settlement) or against the possession of private funds in a *kibbutz* (communal workers' settlement)—show that there is a new law. Not mere customs, but a new law—for mere customs are not binding and there is no need to "evade" them. Thus, both spheres of Palestinian life are legalistic—"halachic"—in structure: the religious, with the talmid hacham as its basic ideal, and the profane, with the halutz as its center.

This formal similarity, which is certainly not accidental, makes understanding between the two spheres particularly difficult and postpones any synthesis between their two ideal types to the indefinite future. The non-Orthodox Jew of the Diaspora will even today sometimes feel a certain regret at having to deviate from the norm of religious law; he will occasionally look on his secular Jewishness as a mere fraction of the full tradition; and he will have a certain bad conscience that can be appealed to. The new Jew in Palestine does not have this bad conscience; he meets his own norm, at least when he lives up to the ideal of the halutz; he lives for his own law, which he regards as equal, if not superior, to the law of the Torah. The lawgiver has changed, to be sure; he is no longer God but the new national community. And here, again, lies a danger and an opportunity.

This process of secularization was, as we have seen, a historical necessity, because only through its instrumentality could the fullness of the "world," which had been steadily slipping away from Orthodox Jewry for two centuries, be regained. As profound a religious thinker as the late Chief Rabbi of the Holy Land, Abraham Kuk, had the force and courage to recognize this interconnection, which he formulated by saying: "The more worldly life there is, the more holiness there can be."

Indeed, the hallowing of everyday life, so characteristic of Judaism, is not possible

if there is no longer any Jewish everyday life. Here, in and next to the national and social meaning of Zionism, and particularly profane Zionism, lies Zionism's religious meaning; it has given back to the Jewish people their everyday life. Today, the religious Jew and Zionist—from whose standpoint this essay is written—faces the task of once more hallowing this newly regained everyday life. If he is successful, it will be the beginning of a synthesis, in which, as in every synthesis, the two elements will not remain unchanged but will mutually transform one another.

THE halutz is a dynamic ideal; he cannot exist without continuous movement, he is a pioneer and must always have new tasks. The talmid hacham, on the other hand, has a certain static quality: his immersion in the Law, whose highest commandment is to study, is impossible without inner tranquillity. In the Diaspora, this relatively static attitude has filled a sociological function and helped preserve the threatened Jewish minority. It induced among many Jews, even those without actual religious convictions, a far-reaching traditionalism, which they experienced and justified in national terms, as a means for safeguarding continuity and survival.

In Palestine this kind of nationalist traditionalism has become unnecessary (except, perhaps, from the point of view of relations with Jews living in the Diaspora); the existence of the Jewish community in Palestine is assured by far more substantial needs and accomplishments. Precisely for this reason, one can be a religious Jew in Eretz Israel only if one—is religious.

And one can be religious only if one defines the premises of one's faith dogmatically—yes, theologically—rather than nationalistically or sociologically, as has been the case with so much religious writing and thinking in the Diaspora in recent years, when national cohesion has been such a burning concern.

What the old talmid hacham could accept as self-evident and therefore did not have to

formulate, his future successor in Palestine must now place at the center of his argument with himself and others. This argument, if successful, will lead to a renewal of the prophetic impulses and content of biblical Judaism, to a religious attitude of social responsibility and national self-criticism combined with the rabbinical hallowing of everyday life. These two elements establish two points of convergence between the ideal of the talmid hacham and the best representatives of the ideal of the halutz.

But the ideal of the halutz will also incur changes through its contact with the new talmid hacham. When the need for a continuous dynamism will have weakened, the need for a more stable Jewish and spiritual content—a need that even today makes its appearance in certain moments of emptiness—will become more and more urgent. The renewal of the Hebrew language and literature will no longer suffice as content; nor will participation in the aesthetic and social molding of modern civilization, though this is necessary and fully justified. An era of inner peace, which we cannot confidently expect but can at least hope for, will perhaps bring a deeper contemplation of the human and Jewish foundations of our existence. Whether we take advantage of this moment, or pass it by, depends on how the carriers of Jewish tradition and Jewish faith prepare for it; here lies their great responsibility, and their great opportunity.

All this is music for the future, but one of its motifs is already distinctly audible today. I refer to the social and religious constructive effort of the religious workers of Palestine, particularly those of the religious kibbutzim. Most of these are of the religious Zionist Hapoel Hamizrachi workers' movement, but a few have been established even by the extremely Orthodox—and so-called non-Zionist—Poale Agudath Israel. Historically speaking, these kibbutzim are late-comers, springing from the desire of Jewish Orthodoxy to participate in that pioneering way of life which was originally the creation of non-Orthodox and anti-Orthodox Jews. But in a deeper sense, the religious kibbu-

tzim represent a new Jewish type, which may foreshadow a fulfillment of the ancient yearning for a Jewish religious socialism.

Despite all the justified criticism that may be made of this fragment of reality, it is a fragment of reality, and it points in the right direction. Even here, *talmid hacham* and *halutz* have not fused into a new personality, but they have at least met one another.

Meanwhile, however, both types have encountered a new competitor in the heart of the Jewish youth; an entirely new ideal seems to be forming, equally removed from the *talmid hacham* and the *halutz*: the partisan.

THE Jew who was for so long—or was at least regarded and represented as—defenseless, has learned again to bear arms. The *halutz* had already added this trait to the Jewish pedagogic ideal, and in the last few years, Jewish education in Palestine has increasingly taken it into account, ideologically as well as practically. The Jewish fighters of the Warsaw ghetto and those within the French Resistance have corrected the image of the Jew in his own eyes and in the eyes of the non-Jewish world. The new Jew no longer allows himself to be dragged unresisting to slaughter. And that is good.

But, as is generally known, this development has not stopped at the point of mere and pure self-defense. In Palestine a "resistance movement" has arisen whose extremist sections have engaged in individual terror and in some cases even in mass terror and reprisals. I cannot go here and now into the political origins and consequences of this phenomenon, although I have very considered opinions on both these aspects; I can only discuss its educational implications, which are far more extensive and important than generally supposed. Even among those sections of the youth that are organizationally far removed from the terroristic "dissidents" and that, bound by a military discipline of their own, may even be prepared to combat them, the image of the young Jew, fighting with all the weapons at his disposal for an immediate and definitive po-

litical solution, has begun in part to replace the ideal of the *halutz*.

The concept of slow, arduous building, the "revolution with a long breath," as Kurt Blumenfeld once called Zionism, has in part been replaced by the messianic—or pseudo-messianic—mood and the conviction that, since a brief historical moment can determine the life or death of the nation, this end justifies all and any means. The profound despair of a part of our nation, which has lost a third of its people; the attraction exercised by a combination of conspiracy and strict military discipline on so many of the young people, including Jews, of our time; the magical rapport that has always existed between the idea of a "beautiful death" and youth with its pressing unfulfilled energies—all these factors are at work. And this new type presents an even stronger contrast to the old Jewish student ideal than the *halutz* did.

There are today in Palestine several kinds of youth groups that desire to create a conscious separation between the old "Jew" and the new "Hebrew." Initiated by the poetry of Tschernichowsky, with its prayers to the statue of Apollo and the Baal gods of Canaan, as well as by the inconsistent ideology of Berdichevsky, with its rejection of any "spirit of Judaism," a tendency has emerged that sees the developing Jewish nation in Palestine only in an episodic context, but in no essential connection with the Jewish people in the Diaspora and its historical epochs. The most radical words and acts of this whole group, which is still a small one, can and must be regarded as expressions of a kind of Hebrew heathenism.

This frightening perspective should not be concealed from the reader, particularly since it is known to everyone seriously interested in the life of Palestinian youth. For the most part, of course, Palestine's educational forces, parents, schools, youth movements, and military organizations—to list them in order of increasing influence—are far from such extreme attitudes and try to combat them, though not always with much understanding of their real underlying

causes. These, as always, are to be found, not in the realm of pedagogy, but in politics. Political developments and not educators will, of course, mold the future type of Jew. Education can only formulate analytical predictions, utter warnings, and take certain modest precautions.

IF THE Jewish community in Palestine becomes a kind of "Sparta" obliged to stand guard against a sea of "Messenians," this political and military reality will have a far more profound effect than any pedagogic theory and educational practice, even if, contrary to expectation, the educational system should for a time preserve a relative independence. Sparta carried out her pan-Hellenic obligations only very incompletely, and not infrequently betrayed Greece to the Persian king. Sparta's share in the Persian war was not historically decisive, despite Plataea and Thermopylae — the prototype of Masada. Marathon and Salamis were *Athenian*

victories, the accomplishments of that Athens which, while fully preserving and developing its military might, knew how to place itself in a political situation that permitted it to make its immortal contribution to the Greek present and the Greek future, to the Near Eastern Greek diaspora and the spirit of Hellas.

If Jewish policy and world policy rescue our new Jewish community from the fate of becoming a "Sparta," the type of the Jew as partisan will characterize only an episode, one that our history and educational policy will transcend. And then the struggle for a new personality ideal in Palestine may lead at last to a synthesis of *talmid hacham* and *halutz*.

But any attempt at this moment to describe in detail the specific contents of that synthesis would be a presumptuous and futile interference with the lord of history, who changes the tides of time, and men within them.

WHAT CHANCE FOR ARAB-JEWISH ACCORD?

The Basic Issues That Must Be Resolved

ROBERT WELTSCH

LONDON

EYES are now turned towards the Aegean island of Rhodes, with its medieval Crusaders' fortress, and men ask: will the history of Palestine record a "Peace of Rhodes"? Will the name of this island be linked in the future with the beginning of a new and happier era, in which old feuds and nationalist hatreds will be forgotten, and enemies join hands in a great enterprise to develop and enrich an ancient soil?

Many people are sceptical as to the chances of one man's being able to bring about what has proved impossible in the past. Yet that man is a man of wisdom and justice, and he wields the authority of the supreme international body. All parties concerned must realize by now what is at stake if he fails. The odds, it seems to me, are in favor of success.

Observers in London are convinced that

WILL Palestine's anxious weeks of truce lead to a lasting political settlement or will they prove to be only a short wait between two periods of bloodshed? ROBERT WELTSCH is considered by many the best informed and most penetrating analyst of the political forces, both in Palestine and on the world scene, which are today struggling for mastery of that country's future. Fully aware of the pitfalls of prophecy, he here makes a try at foreshadowing the shape of peaceful things to come. In the past two years, Dr. Weltsch has contributed a series of articles to COMMENTARY that have received international attention; his latest was "Above All, Avert War!" which appeared in the April issue. Dr. Weltsch was born in Prague in 1891, and for almost twenty years (1919-38) he edited the *Juedische Rundschau*, official organ of the Zionist Organization in Germany. Since 1938, he has made his home in Palestine, where he has been editor of two weeklies, and has written for *Ha-aretz*, *Palestine Post*, and other publications.

as soon as a tangible plan emerges after the first stages of preliminary negotiations, the matter will no longer rest with the mediator alone; strong pressure will be exerted by Britain and the United States for a solution by "agreement"—which is the goal Mr. Bevin has longed for ever since he assumed responsibility for Britain's Palestine policy. Agreement requires, however, a common Anglo-American policy. Since the recognition of Israel by President Truman and the latest outbursts against Britain in the American press, the cleavage between the British and American attitudes has seemed sharper than ever.

How, then, can one expect a sudden change now?

As a matter of fact, American recognition was more of a shock to London than the proclamation of the state itself. For here Anglo-American relations are held to be the key to Britain's world position, and nothing could have hit the British government harder than such an outright gesture of dissent; President Truman's proclamation was a bombshell. For Britain, and especially for Bevin, Palestine is as much an "American" as a "Jewish" problem. Thus, while preparations go on in Rhodes, equal interest will be focused on Washington and London. The Anglo-American Round Table may become no less important to Palestine than Count Bernadotte's conferences.

Almost all observers agree that without a straightening-out of Anglo-American differences there will be no peace in Palestine. The fighting may be resumed, and there may follow, in the pungent phrase of the London *Economist*, an Anglo-American "war by proxy." In the view of close observers, however, certain signs of a rapprochement, at least on some points, have begun to

appear. The main question is, of course, who will yield. Meanwhile British public opinion, though opposed to formal recognition at this particular moment, has come to regard Israel as an established fact, here to stay.

The truce may turn out to be a very protracted affair, extended again and again as occasion requires. It may also provide a new disguise for the old escapism of those who do not want any solution, and therefore simply play for time by setting up one inquiry after another. For the two parties most immediately concerned, the Jews and the Arabs, it will be a "truce of attrition" and a war of nerves. At the beginning of the truce the two opposing sides seemed as opposed as ever—each side laying down conditions entirely unacceptable to the other. And there is still no outside force ready to fight a war in order to impose peace in Palestine. The basic problem, as it has confronted the British and the Zionists for over thirty years, remains unchanged and still has to be faced.

LOOKING back at the eventful and dramatic weeks between the termination of the British Mandate and the beginning of Count Bernadotte's truce, four facts clearly emerge:

1. The British withdrawal, with its deliberate creation of chaos and its—at least partial—"scorched-earth" policy, forms an inglorious chapter of British history. On the other hand, it was the British who, perhaps unconsciously and while declaring contrary intentions, implemented *de facto* partition almost exactly according to the United Nations scheme of November 29.

2. The Jewish state, recognized by the United States, the Soviet Union, and other powers, is now an established fact that can be eliminated only by war.

3. The Arab-Jewish war, although it did not reach its fullest scale, has already brought great loss of life and immense destruction to many parts of the country, apart from the disruption of economic life. Militarily, the Jews have done better than many expected.

4. The present truce is the last opportunity to avert final catastrophe and achieve a negotiated peace that would not be what the Germans call a *Siegfriede*—that is, based on military victory alone—but would correspond to the full intricacy of the situation. The object of such peace would be to pave the way for regional security in Palestine and peaceful cooperation between the Arab and Jewish peoples.

THE manner in which the British left Palestine was a universal scandal. It seems inexcusable even to those British who believed that they had ample justification for being angry. In Britain itself, many were bewildered when they read that British officials were simply abandoning their offices *in toto*, with typewriters, files, and furniture, saying goodbye and disappearing. Onlookers were horrified at the prospect of civil war in the Holy Land, but the British wish to get rid of the whole burden was so strong that painful impressions seemed of minor importance.

Public indignation did not question the good faith of a government whose top ministers had repeatedly and unequivocally declared in Parliament that they wanted to transfer the administration of Palestine to the United Nations *in an orderly way*. But this government would not let the UN Commission enter Palestine before May 1, and in the meantime permitted things to get into such a state as to render the intervention of that Commission after May 1 futile. By that time all mail service, air communications, etc.—which the Commission was supposed to take over—were already suspended, Palestine's credit balances blocked, and most of the other administrative services in disintegration.

By thus deliberately eliminating its recognized "legal successor," the British government created an administrative vacuum in Palestine; and, since a vacuum cannot withstand external pressure, a Jewish state had to fill it after the termination of the Mandate. Even those who held the view that no Jewish state should be proclaimed

without the full cooperation of the United Nations and without simultaneously settling the whole Palestine problem, could not, under the circumstances, oppose the logic by which a Jewish government emerged as the legal authority in an area already autonomously administered by the Jews. Ironical and paradoxical as it may seem, British non-cooperation with the United Nations forced the Jewish state into existence—and made unfeasible the transition period originally envisaged by the Assembly decision.

But the story does not end here. During the five months of smouldering civil war preceding the end of the Mandate, and in spite of proclaimed British "neutrality," there was a very strong suspicion among more intelligent Arabs that the British government was actually implementing the partition decision. The British had created autonomous national administrative entities, and at almost every place where there was any transfer of authority at all they handed over local assets and military strong-points to the side entitled to them under the partition scheme. There were many exceptions to this, and naturally we heard many complaints, but British action in conformity with the partition scheme was the general rule, even if it was less advertised.

Moreover, some secret understanding seems to have been reached by which the Arabs are not allowed by the British to enter territory assigned to the Jews by the United Nations. Although everybody agrees that the British act almost openly as the allies of the Arab League, Bevin has chiefly defended himself in Parliament by repeatedly stating that the Arab states have not invaded Jewish territory. This is not entirely correct; many attacks on Jewish territory have been launched by Arab states from the South and the North, and the British government cannot claim credit for the fact that they were repelled by Jewish forces. Nevertheless, Bevin's line of defense is of great political significance because it hints that British policy, although not explicitly conceding it, roughly accepts partition for

all practical purposes. From Mr. Bevin's statements it can be inferred that even he would agree that Arab incursions into Jewish territory (if they had occurred) would have to be branded as aggression. At present he argues that the Jews, and not the Arabs, violated the demarcation line of the partition scheme by taking Jaffa, Acre, and other Arab places not inside the Jewish state area. But what can all this mean but that the British accept partition, albeit grudgingly and unwillingly?

It was obvious at Lake Success, during the endless debates in the Assembly, that the British sided with the Arabs. In their view, all the UN discussions were highly unrealistic, and they were waiting until all proposals had proved impracticable before they resumed a leading part in the discussions. Now they are very proud that it was their initiative that led to the first success—the appointment of the mediator who achieved the four weeks' truce. In view of the unwillingness of all the powers to contribute military force, it was clear that only British cooperation could end the deadlock. Any kind of "trusteeship" was doomed, for by this time it would have required nothing less than a complete reconquest of the country by a strong army. That possibility can now be definitely ruled out. Today everything depends on the Arabs and Jews themselves: they can have war or peace.

THE British estimate of the situation is roughly as follows:

The Palestine problem cannot be solved against the wishes and the will of the whole Arab world. Moreover, a solution that would satisfy the Arabs, or at least a part of the Arabs, is desirable, not only from the British point of view, but also from the American. Indeed, such a solution would be in the interest of the United Nations and of the whole world, and—according to an old British argument—also in that of the Jews. A complete Jewish victory—even if possible—would win nothing permanent for the Jews; on the contrary, it would provoke Arab nationalism to the extreme, awaken thirst

for revenge, and create an enemy who would be a constant and deadly danger to the Jewish state.

The immediate result of an Arab defeat would be the downfall of some of the governments in the Arab states and the transfer of power to fanatical, semi-totalitarian nationalists suspicious of the West under any circumstances. Such a development might easily lead to some kind of permanent civil war amid a chaos in which uncontrollable forces would rise to the surface. Xenophobia would sweep over a vast area, bringing with it the persecution of Jews and Christians alike. Communism, which would not shrink from exploiting nationalist feeling, would win increasing influence. To prevent all this, the defeat and humiliation of the present Arab regimes, which, in spite of their ostensible intransigence, are still the most receptive to Western diplomacy, must be avoided. The Western world, relying on the Arabs as the guardians of a vast and strategically vital area, cannot permit Arab disintegration any more than Disraeli could permit a complete Turkish rout in 1877. Therefore the British do not want partition to be enforced against stubborn Arab opposition. Unless they want to drive the Arabs into a general Asiatic revolt against the West—Communist or otherwise—they must be very careful. So the British argue.

Many Jews (and non-Jews) believe that this picture does not faithfully represent the real Arab world of today. They see the Arab League as a British puppet devised to camouflage the designs of British imperialism, and they are convinced that the Arabs would be neither willing nor able to fight partition without encouragement or arms from the British. Left alone and without the handicap of an embargo on arms, the Jews, it is held, could win the war against the Arab world of today and make peace with it—even, perhaps, on the basis of a Jewish state in the whole of Palestine. The British argument, say these, is just another attempt to suppress the Jewish state—for reasons called imperialist, anti-Semitic, or even Nazi.

The weakness of the Arab armies was exposed in the first weeks of the war, and the notorious disunity among the Arab states makes an internecine Arab war more likely than a coordinated fight against the Jews. Those holding this view do not like the present truce, nor do they have any faith in the results of the coming negotiations.

However, even if this Jewish estimate of Arab strength (which possibly rests on an over-estimation of Jewish strength) is, in purely military terms, correct, the fact still remains that the opposing view of the great powers cannot be ignored, least of all by the Jews. Great Britain will not desert the Arabs completely, and the United States will not wage a war against Britain. Moreover, only if the Arabs continue to look on Britain as their protector (regardless of whether or not they like her) and remain dependent on her for arms and other materials, will she be able to exert that restraining influence which she has already made felt in order to prevent large-scale attacks on the Jewish state's territory.

IT is against this background that all proposals for a settlement must be seen. There is an abundance of rumors and surmises, the most persistent being to the effect that an ultimate settlement must be based on some closer relation between what are called the strongest (or even the only really existent) forces in the Middle East—namely, Israel and Transjordan. This idea has many supporters, in Britain as well as in the United States, and it is sometimes supplemented by a mysterious "Clayton Plan" that is said to envisage, not only the aggrandizement of King Abdullah's kingdom at the expense of Arab Palestine, but also some compensation for other Arab states, including the cession of a strip of southern Palestine to Egypt.

Closer cooperation between Jewish Palestine and Transjordan recommends itself for natural reasons. At the same time, it must be recognized that the difficulties of establishing common federal institutions are almost insurmountable in view of the com-

pletely different social structures of the two countries.

Federations, or confederations, remain mere academic abstractions as long as the concrete details are not defined. In any case, a federation always means imposing some form of restriction of sovereignty on the single units that compose it. The real question is how far this restriction of sovereignty is to go and how power is to be divided between the federal authority and the single states. Yet some common ground can easily be established; e.g., in economic development projects and even foreign policy.

But any such scheme will inevitably raise the question of immigration. As a sovereign state, Israel can administer immigration any way it pleases. The Arabs—and the British, too, to a certain extent—contend that unlimited Jewish immigration would be tantamount to preparation for aggression, because a growing Jewish population would put tremendous pressure on the Arabs inside the overcrowded Jewish state as well as on those at its frontiers. Immigration has long ceased to be regarded as a purely economic issue; it has now become a matter of political and even of military relevance. If there is to be peace, the Arabs say, military questions will have to be settled, not unilaterally, but by some mutual arrangement; otherwise the growth of military might on either side will arouse distrust and become a source of further trouble.

Immigration has often been called the stumbling block of all Palestine negotiations; it has prevented all solutions in the past and still may do so in the future. The Jews say that if immigration were made a bargaining counter, Israel would forfeit its most important sovereign right—and then we would be back where we were under the Mandate, only with less security and under less settled conditions. Here the cleavage is as great as it ever was. It could, however, be overcome if the root of the problem were clearly faced. Actually, immigration is only an accessory to the main issue—which is *expansion*. In other words: any territorial solution would have to be felt as perfectly

sincere and final. Otherwise there will be no peace.

The real mutual distrust between Jews and Arabs derives from what I would call the “bridgehead complex.” Probably all Arabs, insofar as they are capable of thinking politically, are deeply convinced of the aggressive and expansionist character of Zionism. Rightly or wrongly, they believe that a Jewish state with unqualified sovereignty would be nothing else than a springboard for further Jewish expansion. This fortified military bridgehead, as the Arabs see it, would serve as the base for a large and well trained army supplied with advanced weapons from the United States, the Soviet Union, and all the big industrial nations; and it would in addition develop its own armament industry. It would also be under the constant pressure of masses of immigrants—whose figures take on exaggerated dimensions in the Arab imagination. The guarantee of the United Nations being worth what it is (or what the so-called “Four Power Guarantee” proclaimed in Munich was worth to Czechoslovakia in March 1938), the Arabs are convinced they would be at the mercy of a Jewish army whenever the bell tolled.

BUT the “bridgehead complex” is by no means confined to the Arabs alone. Just as I was writing these lines I saw the following sentence in the *Manchester Guardian*, cabled by Arthur Koestler from Tel Aviv: “Since the invasion by neighboring states, who used Jaffa as a bridgehead for Iraqi and Syrian infiltration, even moderate Jews are convinced that to restore Jaffa to another uncontrolled Arab influx would be equal to suicide on the Trojan horse pattern.”

I am not sure whom Mr. Koestler regards as “moderate Jews,” but I do believe that the heart of his story is correct. The argument used here is the same one in essence that the Arabs constantly use with regard to the whole of the Jewish state; and it may not be far from the point to put the stress on the word “uncontrolled.” Those, how-

ever, who regard any "controls" as a violation of "sovereignty," will find it difficult to accept the fact that only some sort of mutually agreed-upon control can allay the fundamental distrust on both sides, or at least mitigate it to a degree that would make a *modus vivendi* possible.

Unfortunately, the happenings of the last weeks did not improve the situation in this respect. The Arabs' fears did not decrease; and now they seem to think that recent events have justified their worst apprehensions. This position is also held by many in Britain. It fits a British theory to the effect that Britain, while supporting the Zionist enterprise, still has to protect the Arabs from being dispossessed or subjected to the rule of a foreign minority. This view was expressed as far back as 1921 in the first report of a long succession of committees of inquiry—a report that was published as one of the famous White Papers on Palestine. The inquiry into the causes of the anti-Jewish disturbances of 1921 conducted by Sir Thomas Haycraft came to the conclusion, based primarily on evidence given by the political representative of the Zionist Organization, Dr. David Eder, that the Arabs' "fears" were justified and understandable.

It is significant that this was said at a time when Jewish immigration was very slight and the first stream of immigrants had already caused such an economic crisis that even some Zionist leaders wanted to halt immigration for an interval. (High Commissioner Sir Herbert [now Viscount] Samuel tried to help these immigrants by employing them in public works, mainly road-building. This project saw the beginning of one of the most romantic aspects of Zionism, the enthusiasm for primitive physical work for the sake of the homeland. The spirit of sacrifice and the social impact of that "Labor Battalion" became elements of lasting influence in the Palestinian labor movement. In later days some of those same road-workers and stone-breakers became *kibbutzniks* and Haganah leaders.)

Yet, though Jewish immigration figures at that time were negligible and seemed to

give no particular cause for fear, Haycraft said it was the duty of the mandatory power (and also in the interest of the practicability of Zionism) to allay Arab "fears" and give some reassurance and safeguards.

This was done a year later, in the White Paper of June 1922, whose authors were Winston Churchill and Sir Herbert Samuel. This document ingeniously expounded the philosophy of a "bi-national" Palestine, and while explicitly stating that no Jewish state was contemplated and no imposition of a Jewish nationality upon the Arab population was envisaged, it did declare that the Jews are in Palestine "as of right and not on sufferance," and that they were entitled to increase by immigration. This statement was designed, by quieting the complaints of the Arabs, to pave the way for a peaceful and constructive Zionist effort. But confidence was not restored. And since then Britain has tried more than ever to show the Arabs that they were protected and did not have to fear being overpowered. Each of the following White Papers and committees returned to this theme. On the other hand, most Zionist spokesmen of those days, while adhering to the aim of ultimate statehood, tried to show the unreasonableness of this fear, declaring that the Jews did not want either to dominate or to be dominated.

ONE of the psychological results of the military strength that the Jews have demonstrated since the very beginning of the fighting in 1948—twenty-seven years after Haycraft—is the Arab conviction that events have fully justified Arab fears. Though the outer world now sees the British as allies of the Arabs, the Arabs themselves accuse Britain (and some British admit the validity of the accusation) of a "historical crime" against the Arab nation—the crime of having brought a formidable non-Arab military force into what they call an Arab country, and thus endangering the Arab position in the whole of the Middle East. Behind much of the present attitude of the British public lies the awareness that Britain did something no other power

would have done by helping an ostensibly peaceful colonizing venture that eventually turned out able to muster a military force superior to that of the Arabs.

Apparently the British had underestimated the Jews and overestimated the Arab irregulars whom they had so freely admitted into the country before the termination of the Mandate. (The minister responsible bluntly stated in the House of Commons that he had "no information" about their intrusion.) When they realized the true relative strengths of the forces involved, the British intervened—though only temporarily—in favor of the Arabs, as at Jaffa, Jerusalem, and elsewhere, having become convinced that—in the words of the *London Times* of July 7—"the Zionist plan of frightening the Arab population into flight from the Zionist area proceeded steadily and efficiently, and its intensity increased as the extremist Irgun Zvai Leumi, whose ultimate and undisguised aim is to seize all of Palestine and Transjordan, gained greater successes. Jaffa and the Arab quarter of Jerusalem began to feel the pressure. Then came the massacre of Deir Yassin . . . and the machine-gunning of panic-stricken civilians in flight after an incomprehensible withdrawal of British troops from Haifa town had allowed the Zionists to gain control of the city."

A similar interpretation was given by such a responsible paper as the *Economist*, and this despite the unequivocal statement of the British Military Commander of Haifa, General Stockwell, that there had been no massacre in Haifa, and the testimony to the same affect contained in the High Commissioner's telegram to Lake Success.

To establish the truth about these events is of the utmost moral relevance; and the Israeli government will certainly regard it as one of its first duties also to investigate thoroughly and establish the responsibility for the incident at Deir Yassin, which was so strongly condemned by its predecessor, the Jewish Agency. It is vital for the sake of justice and Jewish honor.

But in the present context I am not concerned with this intricate and important

moral question; my argument refers merely to the psychological implications of the matter and its political effect. It served to increase Arab fear to the point of panic, and its effect on the "bridgehead complex" hardly needs exposition.

THE Jewish rejoinder is equally clear. Had the Arabs accepted the United Nations Assembly verdict (or "recommendation") for partition, nobody would have been hurt, nor would there have been any reason for fear. It was not the Jews but the Arabs who started the fighting. The Arab attack begun on December 1 turned into a boomerang—but it was the Arabs' own choice. The Jews had a right to defend themselves against unprovoked aggression—and did they not also defend the valid verdict of the highest international tribunal?

This case is, of course, very strong. But it remains strong *only so long as the original scheme is adhered to*. The Arabs, and many Englishmen, do not believe that the Jews have shown themselves sincere in this respect. They say that the Jews wanted war and prepared for it, in order to realize the full Biltmore program for a Jewish state in all of Palestine. The Arab and British fear that excessive immigration would necessarily lead to expansion is undiminished. Add to this the romantic magniloquence of the many Jewish speeches that continue to denounce partition and claim the whole country for the Jews. In the view of the *Economist*, the original UN scheme, with its strategically and economically impossible frontiers, does not make any sense except as a temporary improvisation in preparation for the conquest of "all of Palestine."

The elimination of this suspicion is of common interest to all concerned. It is a matter of the utmost delicacy and its solution would require agreement on a system of safeguards and controls that would not only remove the danger of aggression, but also prevent Arab-Jewish relations from being poisoned anew by similar fears. Such guarantees would give the Jewish state the freedom to regulate immigration according

to its own requirements, without making it a "danger" to its neighbors.

If this is not done, I do not see how a federal scheme can work. And without such a scheme there remains as the most favorable outcome the prospect of a state that would build its life with spade in one hand and sword in the other. Israel would have complete sovereignty, but also the cold hostility of its neighbors. Some Jews would welcome this; in their view it is desirable that the Arabs should live in constant fear of Israel. Thus would security be achieved: *oderint dum metuant*—let them hate, as long as they fear! This conception might be considered logically plausible—though by no means acceptable—if one matter of paramount relevance did not render it futile. That matter is the city of Jerusalem. A partition based on hostility and fear cannot solve the problem of Jerusalem. And Jerusalem is the key to the whole Palestine problem.

IN DEFIANCE of the platonic declarations in favor of the internationalization of the Jerusalem area, and in spite of the ensuing prolonged sessions of the UN Trusteeship Council, Jerusalem was not spared the horrors of civil war. The Holy City suffered more than any other part of the country and its fate still lies in the balance. Instead of becoming the religious centre of the world and a realization of Isaiah's vision of a "House for all Nations," it has been converted into a battlefield. It may be that the present plight of the city is to be regarded as the result of a deliberate Arab act of revenge for Jewish terrorist attacks that had already changed the city's appearance previously. Since the bombing of public buildings, including the King David Hotel, parts of the New City had come to look like some of the streets in blitzed London. Britons were free targets for terrorist bullets. The British reaction, including curfews and "security zones," caused many inconveniences, but civilian life on the whole went on almost normally. Since the partition decision, however, Jerusalem has become a place of unspeakable horror.

When the British left, they did not hand the reins over to the proposed "international authority"—which was non-existent anyhow. The Arabs refusing to take over their own municipal services, only the Jewish quarters retained some sort of municipal administration, although of a martial-law type. A fight for the city became inevitable, and the British let loose the Arab Legion, with the result that now the constructive efforts of a whole generation have been undone, the administration of the city disintegrated, economic life destroyed; and the population, deprived of the most essential public services as well as of food and water, has had to undergo a horrible ordeal—only those who have lived in Jerusalem can understand what it means to be without water in the summer—which they have faced with courage and endurance.

The siege laid to the Jewish quarters of Jerusalem was regarded as a legitimate means of war. Together with the shelling of the city, it had the obvious aim of frightening the Jewish population away and making the city preponderantly Arab before a final political decision was taken. This object has not been achieved. But the siege will be resumed if Bernadotte fails.

And there are strong signs that Jerusalem is playing a peculiar role in the political plan that some very influential people—not far away from Downing Street—seem to have in mind. This plan envisages the following, more or less: Since the Jewish state cannot now be abolished without very radical use of force, some sort of Jewish state will have to be accepted (though not necessarily within the borderlines drawn by the UN Assembly on November 29). This will demand a great sacrifice from the Arabs, and they will have to be placated by some visible increases of prestige to their side that could be given out as an Arab victory. Apparently, Jerusalem is considered the appropriate object for this purpose.

Constant rumors have it that the British government has made a deal with King Abdullah, providing that while the Transjordan Arab Legion (which actually is part

of the British colonial army) is to abstain from entering the area allotted by UN to the Jewish state, it is to concentrate its efforts on the capture of the entire Holy City. After the occupation of the Jewish quarter in the Old City, King Abdullah visited Jerusalem on a "triumphal" drive, and the British press hastened to announce that his Majesty's representative in Amman, Mr. A. S. Kirkbride, had asked the king to give an undertaking with regard to the safety of the Holy Places. Abdullah was pleased to give it, as this seemed to be an anticipation of his ultimate jurisdiction over Jerusalem. If the idea of an international regime in Jerusalem breaks down owing to the incapacity of the United Nations to enforce anything of the sort, the British would at least seem to prefer an Arab regime of Abdullah's type to Jewish domination of the city. In this respect, Abdullah has replaced the Mufti. (It is significant that no mention is made anywhere of the Mufti, who a short time ago seemed the most sinister figure and the real villain of the piece.)

Jerusalem as an Arab city or the capital of an Arab kingdom would be an affront to which Jews and Zionists could not be reconciled. A Zionist state with no voice in the affairs of Jerusalem, and a Zionist state that did not maintain Jerusalem as the spiritual center of the Jewish people as a whole, would seem to many to be a distortion of the Zionist ideal. Feeling for Jerusalem is deeply rooted in the Jewish soul, and it cannot be suppressed; it would take on an aggressive character if the martyrdom of the Jewish population there were prolonged. The incorporation of Jerusalem in an Arab state would create an irrepressible Jewish irredentism that would express itself not only in mystical dreams, as in former centuries, but would become a permanent threat to peace.

THE Jews will not accept an Arab regime for Jerusalem. But what is the alternative? Could Jerusalem become Jewish? The odds are against it. The city is entirely surrounded by indisputably Arab country. Un-

less some genuine rapprochement took place, a Jewish-dominated Jerusalem would be under the constant menace of a hostile environment, with the cutting of communications possible at any time. But apart from these geographical difficulties, inclusion of Jerusalem in the Jewish state would not alter the fact that Jerusalem is not only a Jewish city but also an Arab Moslem city.

Let us for the moment leave to one side Christian religious interests, which could easily be safeguarded under any regime, there being no political or religious rivalry with regard to them except for the internal quarrels of the various Christian denominations. Jerusalem's Arab citizens, however, form a very important part of the life and history of the city. Practically all the buildings that give Jerusalem its incomparable and timeless beauty are Moslem. From the architectural point of view, which is by no means irrelevant in classifying a city, Jerusalem has an undeniably Arab character. The rather colorless modern Jewish sections do not obscure the splendor of the Old City with the Dome of the Rock.

What can be done? Internationalization, of course, would be better than the inclusion of the city in any purely national state. But, unfortunately, experience does not bear out the practicability of internationalization. The precedent of Trieste is not encouraging. Moreover, the above-mentioned political intrigues, in which the British—and possibly the Americans too—look to a settlement that will reconcile the Arabs to partition by giving Jerusalem to an Arab ruler, makes us realize that partition may demand too heavy a price, if it means the total loss to Jewry of Zion and the doom of its flourishing Jewish community.

The answer to this challenge cannot be given by the sword alone. Has not the time come to reconsider the whole situation in the light of the inescapable facts? There is no question but that the Jewish state has done much better militarily than many expected, and it is now in a very strong bargaining position. Should it not be our principal aim to devise some political structure

for the whole country by which Jerusalem would remain a common capital for both Jews and Arabs?

Such a solution would admittedly be unique in the world. But the whole Palestine problem, and especially the significance of Jerusalem, is without parallel in history. For many years—the happier years of British administration—both communities lived side by side in Jerusalem and cooperated peacefully in many fields. Now British-made shells from Transjordanian cannon have fallen on the Jewish quarters, and the modern Arab suburbs are devastated. The destruction of Jerusalem would be an appalling tragedy. Is it really too much to expect that human beings should be capable of preventing it from going further, even at this late hour? If Jerusalem were to be destroyed, the Jewish state would be like a Golem—without a soul. With Jerusalem as a

common capital of both peoples of Palestine, even at the cost of a revision of some of the original features of the partition plan, all the essential values could be preserved for both.

Jerusalem is the sore spot on the map of the world today. That it is just this place of all places—the holy shrine of peace—that plays this role, is a heartbreaking tragedy for which all of us have to share the responsibility—Jews, Moslems, and Christians alike. Jerusalem may still precipitate a cataclysm and a disaster. But it may, also, still offer a chance, the last chance, of peace and reconciliation. Jerusalem is the key to any total Palestinian solution. It can divide Arabs and Jews beyond any hope of repair, but it can also be a stepping stone toward that community of feeling and interest which may yet bind together the seemingly irreconcilable.

WHO WILL SOLACE?

H. LEIVICK

WHO will solace the bucket
That hangs above the dark well,
Now that the thirsty sheep
No longer are seen at the well?

In the desert beds
Of sand lie shepherd and flock,
Forever covered over.
In vain the bucket rocks

White. Like an eye overcast
The dark water inspects
Spots. In the eye, seven eyes
With poisoned cataracts.

Water from the depths
Swells on the lips of the well,
Bursts through and flows away
On side and sandy ways.

Hanging on the pole
The bucket eternally eyes
The work of the wind-unraveler,
Unravelling the bucket dry.

Who will solace the bucket
That hangs above the dark well—
Now that the thirsty sheep
No longer are seen at the well?

H. LEIVICK is a leading figure in modern Yiddish literature, particularly well known for his play *The Golem*. Mr. Leivick was born in Russia in 1888 and came to New York, where he now lives, in 1913. This poem has been translated from the Yiddish by Jacob Sloan.

WHY AMERICANS FEEL INSECURE

The Sense of Alienation is Not Exclusively Jewish

ARNOLD W. GREEN

MANY contributors to COMMENTARY have examined what they regard to be the psychological plight of the modern Jew. He is generally seen as an atomized individual, deeply uneasy as to his status in society, with no firm roots anywhere in a complex, kaleidoscopic modern world. Thus, Irving Howe ("The Lost Young Intellectual," October 1946) anatomizes today's lower-middle-class intellectual in his bereaved alienation: having sloughed off his religion and traditional law, having been spoiled and petted by his mother and supported by his father, while being educated toward "success," he absorbs new values that further alienate him. Robert

THROUGH a long succession of literary portrayals of Jewish life, reinforced in recent years by sociologists and political ideologists (Jewish as well as non-Jewish), there has grown up an image of the Jew as a prototype of alienation and rootlessness. To some this has seemed a misfortune of destiny; to the anti-Semitic, somehow a wilful vice; to others, if not a virtue, at least the kind of necessity that could breed insight, stamina, and other virtues. But the basic assumption is always the same: the Jew stands somehow alone and apart from tradition and society—homeless. ARNOLD W. GREEN here expresses his scepticism about the allegedly unique position of the Jew in the contemporary world, declaring that the phenomenon of alienation is felt generally in our American society, and is the result of the disintegration of traditional patterns of personal living under the impact of large-scale industrialization. Mr. Green goes further, suggesting that, if any group feels more sharply alienated than others, it is probably the native American Protestant group—the "ruling" group itself. Mr. Green is assistant professor of sociology at the American University in Washington, D. C. He was born in Newmarket, New Hampshire, in 1914 and attended Clark University, Pennsylvania State College, and Columbia University. He has written widely for professional journals.

Warshaw ("Poet of the Jewish Middle Class," May 1946) claims that the New York lower-middle-class Jewish family, having renounced age-old standards to accept "capitalism without sugar," is bereft of the dignity and purposefulness which upheld the European Jew in the face of all adversity. And Jean-Paul Sartre in his series "Reflections on the Jewish Question" paints a picture of the "inauthentic Jew" as a lone, lost individual who can call neither his soul nor his body his own.

Is the plight these writers outline the problem peculiarly characteristic of Jews? Perhaps it is. But perhaps it is more widely shared by the rest of the population than we customarily think. Perhaps all modern human beings are suffering from a sudden and dramatic historical break with traditional social values and structure, cutting vertically and horizontally through the entire warp and woof of our society, and focused in the disintegration of family and home as we have known them in the past.

This is not to say that there are no specific ethnic-group problems; rather it is a warning against the possibility of misplaced emphasis. Indeed, one can make a strong argument to the effect that even in a crumbling Jewish family life there appears to be more stability and unity than can be found in the Gentile family in the modern metropolis. Perhaps it is not the Jew at all, but the average white, native Protestant who is the typically alienated man of our age.

In a recent wail of pain, E. E. Cummings complained that the world is all a-leak, and life preservers there are none. In other words, we are all in the same boat.

HISTORICALLY, from the ancient Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, through the Mid-

dle Ages, and down to recent decades, a basic family tradition has been preserved in the West: the patriarchal, rural-familistic system.* Within that system, the person lived out his life, rooted to the land and to a way of life that encompassed all his activities. Unquestioned duties and obligations were enforced, but there was financial and emotional security, intimate emotional ties, and close identification with one's fellows.

The division of labor was familial, all working together toward a common goal of family maintenance and perpetuation. The family circle and the local community comprised a complete and virtually isolated social world. Economic life, recreation, education, religious observances, were all a matter of intimate association among a small group of life-long relatives and friends. While the pressures to conformity were overwhelming, the individual nevertheless controlled his fate in ways denied to modern man.

He, in his family, owned or had equity in his own land and tools of production. He was not swept hither and thither by the vagaries of a market economy. Many of the important economic and political issues were local ones, and he could directly affect their development. In this isolated world, social action did not ramify out in unanticipated ways to produce incalculable results. There was an obvious and close relationship between social cause and effect, reward and punishment. As one moved from childhood into adolescence, courtship, and marriage, and the assumption of adult responsibilities, the blueprint for behavior was stable, consistent, unquestioned. Finally, the individual possessed a single status in all of the intimate groups of which he was an important part.

Over against this description—made extreme for the sake of contrast—of the traditional family, another can be placed: the modern, secular, individualized conjugal

unit, composed of a restricted unit of husband, wife, and one or two offspring, living in an urban apartment. It finds itself in an impersonal world, in which personal relationships are scattered, partial, specialized. The old familial functions are no longer home-centered: the husband works away from home, among strangers; the children are educated outside the home by hired specialists; religious observances have waned; and each member of the family goes his own way in seeking recreation, which is today highly specialized for each age group.

RIGHTS and duties are no longer rigidly defined. The demands of shifting and specialized groups with which the individual is associated in home, office, social and professional contacts, require specialized conformities, and not the total personality, but different parts of it, are involved. Emotional security has diminished. The roles assigned the person at different stages in his life history within the family are inconsistent and contradictory; similarly, one's status ebbs and flows as one moves rapidly from one association to another, one career situation to another. Under the impact of the competing needs and value of the various individuals in the unit, the family's solidarity is destroyed, leaving in its wake dissatisfaction, frustration, and intra-familial conflict.

This description is by now commonplace. Far less commonplace is the understanding of why all this happened. One might, like Philip Wylie, utter a roar of indignation, and demand a return to old-fashioned virtues. But the fact would remain that the entire structural basis for the rural-familistic system, to which we still pay ideological obeisance, has been undermined by gargantuan changes that no individual or group has directly planned or instituted.

TO GAIN insight into what has happened to the family, it is necessary to grasp the fact that the industrial revolution has been a *continuing* process which is constantly accelerating, making of all Americans an

* Although cities have always existed in the West, the vast majority of people have until recent decades been rural dwellers, and rural values have dominated even urban areas.

uprooted people.* The accelerating rate of technological invention and industrial expansion has meant the burgeoning of new industries and the falling off of old; sudden demands for new skills and the discarding of old ones. Individual and family fate are decided at a distance. Some unknown technician synchronizes film and sound, and hundreds of professional actors are out of a job. Rail rates are readjusted by a Washington bureau in favor of the South and thousands of mill workers in New Bedford must either migrate or learn a new trade. Factories in the fields dispossess the independent farmer. War orders pour into one area and depopulate neighboring ones; peace revises the process. Change has been so rapid, so cumulative, that it is becoming the hallmark of the American way of life. The continuity of generations is being shattered. Between 1920 and 1934 in excess of 46 million Americans moved from country to city or city to country; and during World War II, it has been estimated, 30 million Americans changed residence.

Up to 1820, more than 90 per cent of the working population in America was engaged in agriculture. By 1940, farm owners and tenants comprised only 10.1 per cent of the working population. From 1870 to 1940, the proportions employed in the manufacturing and mechanical industries shifted very little; but there was a tremendous increase in the size of the "white-collar" group—professionals, clerical workers, businessmen, and public service workers.

In other words, the dominant trend in American economic life is toward an increase in the proportion of *those who manipulate personalities* instead of tools to gain their livelihood. Alba M. Edwards of the Census Bureau (*Comparative Occupation Statistics for the United States, 1870 to 1940*) points out that since 1910 there has been an increasing rate of shift from "hand

workers" to "head workers," and expresses the opinion that the trend will continue to increase.

THUS, in a few short decades a predominantly rural people has become an urban people. In 1860, 19.8 per cent of the population was urban; in 1946, 56.5 per cent. But this is not the whole story, for there is also the process by which the city dominates the hinterland with its values, commercialized recreation, styles, manners, for half of the rural population now lives within an hour's journey of a city of 100,000 or more. Even the physical activity of rural areas is becoming urbanized: according to the 1940 census, almost half the gainfully employed who lived on farms in Connecticut were employed in typical urban occupations: clerks, bookkeepers, salesmen, etc. The personal dislocation that has taken place is indicated by the fact that the *majority* of our urban residents were not born in the city, but migrated to it from rural areas.

But perhaps the most important and dramatic change, leading to a growing powerlessness on the part of the individual in directing his own and his family's life, is the centralization of power and control in our society. Eighty-eight per cent of the working population, excepting agricultural workers, is no longer self-employed. Economic reality is no longer familial employment on familial holdings, but a series of stations in vast, bureaucratically-organized industrial, business, and governmental structures. And this is being accompanied by a steady concentration of wealth and savings (see David Lynch, *The Concentration of Economic Power*, 1946). Instead of a world in which the family directly controls its common economic endeavors, we find ourselves in a world where a growing rapprochement of big business and big government hires atomized individuals to fit pre-determined bureaucratic stations and functions under "directives." Very quietly, behind the ideological facade of verbal conflicts over "socialism," "fascism," and "democracy," this unlabelled trend has been taking place.

* For this and other generalizations in this section, a great debt is owed to the lectures of Dr. James H. S. Bossard, of the University of Pennsylvania, on the subject of "Social Change and Personal Adjustment."

WHAT does this mean psychologically? Since the family is no longer empowered to make plans and decisions and direct its own operations to anywhere near the extent that once was possible, the *individuals* who make it up are pushed and pulled by forces of which they are only dimly aware, and which they can neither control nor stop. A new technological development, a bank failure in Austria, an unidentifiable bureaucrat's decision, the rise to power of a fanatic across the Atlantic, any and all of these may blast and ruin. And all the individual citizen can do is read about it. The concrete world of reality in which he, his family, his associates operate becomes less real than the "paper world" which informs him what "they" are doing, what "they" are planning, what decisions "they" have made, what new scientific discoveries "they" have blessed him with.

Can the laborer find out whether his union leaders are taking him out on strike only to secure a higher wage for him, as they may claim, instead of political advantage for themselves? Can the citizen actually find out what is going on in one of the federal agencies, or the stockholder how the affairs of "his" corporations are being administered? How much control does the voter have over either of the two political machines he has the political right to help into office? As bureaucracy extends, power and responsibility become more and more hidden, with greater possibilities of setting off forces that will ramify out to change, disrupt, control, and manipulate individual lives. The average American scorns the average German's plea that he had no responsibility for the concentration camps, but the average American knows that *he* had nothing to do with the development of the atomic bomb. And, indeed, he did not.

The individual finds himself in a world in which personal and business ethics increasingly go by the board as personal long-range planning becomes more difficult, and life-long residence in one location is no longer the pattern. It is a world of insecurity and uncertainty, blaring headlines and sud-

den shocks, in which the accumulation of experience is insufficient preparation for the next, unforeseen stimulus. And meanwhile a tremendous discharge of nervous energy runs into a hundred deviant channels. Bitterness, despondency, dependency spread like a pall, along with the belief that all is chance. We are still oriented, in terms of thought pattern and emotional pattern, to the slow, stable rhythms of family life on the farm. But the structure that created this basic ideology of living is gone.

Together with the loss of its base in the economy and social organization, the modern family now finds itself supporting competitive values at a far remove from personal stability. The primacy of such disruptive "values" as individual success and romantic love in modern motivations is amply testified to by Hollywood and the advertising pages of any slick magazine.

Modern success-striving does not constitute an altogether radical break with America's past. Sanctification of success exaggerated one tradition while destroying another. In America, the tradition of mutual obligations within rural-familism ran parallel with that of frontier self-help and individualism. Destroying the former, corporate industrialism, with its demands for an urban, mobile, rational, fast-moving personnel, merely exploited self-help and individualism for its own purposes.

BUT success-striving became an end in itself, separate from all considerations of familial or community welfare, except that the successful, like all other members of society, had to be good to their parents—a matter of largesse, not of common enjoyment and control of newly-won wealth and power—and that they were expected to dispense charity and endow foundations, often as devoid of the real sense of community as a business deal.

Each man became his own cause, and the heroes he admired were those who had pushed their way to wealth and power. The new gospel was preached to all classes. In fact, the very essence of success-striving is

the refusal to accept any given station or position; instead, to hurl oneself up the class ladder, regardless of the consequences to oneself or others. Class levels became not so much fixed points of social position as a series of temporary vantage points, from which one either laboriously inched forward, or was forcibly dislodged.

The stability of rural-familism—at least in America—was not founded on cultural *prohibitions* against bettering one's station. Rather the system of rights and duties founded in the family and community, enjoining effort toward attainment of common goals, acted as a brake against physical or psychological freedom of movement. This system was virtually demolished by the new economy and its ideology of success-striving for all. The social changes accompanying the rapid rise of the new economy piled up with such pellmell haste that no new system of rights and duties had time to develop, with the result that each man's relations with other men remained poorly defined. State after state, for example, was forced to pass laws compelling legally adult children to contribute to the support of their parents. Mutual aid within the community broke down; specialized and impersonal agencies were forced to assume responsibility for the destitute and unfortunate.

And what are the *techniques* of success-striving? Modern bureaucratic structures sell, promote, manage; in other words, as business, governmental, or service agencies they manipulate publics instead of things. And within these vast bureaucratic structures, each man manipulates the personalities of those above and below him, guesses the other's ego wants and needs, and adjusts his overt responses toward gaining the good will of others. To "get ahead" one must feign interest in the activities of these others when one has no such interest, defer when one wishes to be aggressive, participate when one wants to withdraw. And, in a contracting economy, all this with the gnawing fear that it may go for naught.

Abram Kardiner has said that success has become modern man's substitute for sal-

vation. Poverty is as reprehensible today as sin was yesterday. Under the frantic pressure for cash and glory, the moral order has cracked. Double-dealing may be kept hidden from the world, but not *failure*. And yet ours is still ideologically, in large measure, a rural-familistic culture embodying the old Protestant values. The majority of our city dwellers were either brought up in rural areas, or are the children of parents raised in the country. Our children's toys and books deal with farm life and animals. Our patriotic songs extol coastlines, rocks and rills and templed hills. Our modern metropolis is inhabited by partially assimilated peasants. Hence our high verbal sanctification of honesty, integrity, and good-fellowship in personal relations, an emphasis that puzzles Continental Europeans and prompts them to accuse all Americans of being hypocritical Babbitts. In any event, to the extent that rural ideals still persist emotionally, they are at war with the drives of the city.

WE HAVE already spoken of the confusion of statuses in the new way of life. At one time, status, taken over from the family, was relatively fixed and definitive. Today, the person interacts within a plethora of groups, and will be accorded a *different* status as he steps from one to another: the moral religious adolescent may be praised at home and vilified in school; the liberal may be appreciated by his college professor and scoffed at later by his business associates. Under the dispensation of modern success-striving, social approbation and a sense of security must be constantly reaffirmed, and this pressure is aggravated by the fact that one is really not in control of one's economic fortunes, the chief determinant of status. Thus it happens that anxiety and conviction of personal failure are endemic in our society.

The Protestant ethic demanded that you work hard, save your money, praise God, pay your debts, and uphold monogamous marriage. At any given time one *knew* whether one was a worthwhile person or not; here, as well as in the strictly economic realm, there was a large measure of personal

control. Today, this is no longer possible, for modern "success" is registered only through externals: bank account, clothes, mannerisms, automobile, club memberships; what counts is how these compare with what others have, and, more important, how *others* view what you have in comparison with what they have. Thus Karen Horney's suggestion that it becomes more important that others fail than that you succeed.

The fact that modern trends place the career in a bureaucratic structure gives a general cultural explanation of that loss of "spontaneity" to which Mr. Howe, cited above, refers. Station in a bureaucracy requires self-discipline: a systematic suppression of impulse in order to insure that the channels of success remain open. Exactly with whom is one's behavior to be spontaneous? With one's employer? With one's army officer? With one's clients? By acting spontaneously now, one may be insuring the loss of opportunity in the future. The bureaucratic control of the functionary's career through that all-important document, the recommendation, forces an attempt to preserve carefully one's relations with a long line of superiors, any one of whom is in a position to endanger the ultimate goal.

The psychological pressures thus created impinge directly upon the life of the family, since they divert energy, time, and talent away from the home. And the new economic order, with its demands for rationality, its dividing-up of the personality, its schooling of impulses, combined with the constant threat of sheer job-insecurity as well as ultimate failure, places a tremendous emotional overload on the modern family. Within it love-relationships must compensate for all the shocks, frustrations, and damming up of impulse that success-striving demands.

THE function of "love" in modern society is peculiarly complex. With the partial disintegration of the rural-familistic system, the actual day-by-day involvement of personal relations—both in work and play—disappeared, and the improvisation and demonstration of a total *emotional* involve-

ment became doubly important as an ideal. The emphasis on such emotional involvement was stepped up as codes of proper conduct with various kinds of persons became increasingly vague. When the behavior of husband and wife, for example, became more and more a matter to be settled in each marriage, rather than by reference to convention, the answer of the culture was to jazz up the tempo of romantic love.

The concept of romantic love rests on a myth. Two young persons arrive at an indeterminate age, meet, and a mysterious cosmic process informs each that this is the "one." They marry, and live happily ever after, constantly fulfilling in every act their *unique* relationship. Marriage becomes, then, not so much an institutional arrangement as a device by which each can secure his or her *individual* desire for personal happiness. Sadly enough, the very fact of basing marriage on romance operates to create a well-nigh universal frustration of the prized sentiment.

In the first place, romantic love is a highly stylized drama that demands some modicum of natural physical endowment and fitting surroundings. But the majority of men are not handsome, the majority of women are not beautiful, and the majority of both are poor. Frustration is inevitable.

Second, success and love, particularly for that segment of the population known as the "middle class," work at cross-purposes. Marriage is still the woman's chief career. The middle-class girl hopes to marry not only a man but a bank balance, so that she may combine the two major goals of her career in a single activity—courtship. But when a man is striving toward success, early marriage seriously interferes with his career. In the rural-familistic system a man's wife was a necessary adjunct to his economic activity; today, a wife is an unproductive luxury that an ambitious young man cannot afford. He needs time, energy, and his available funds for education and to get started in his individual career, a career that is no longer integrated with family life. Thus, at the very time when the culture demands the

intensive idealization of courtship, the stage is set for a battle of the sexes, often involving sexual exploitation, in a context of what Dr. Willard Waller has called "pluralistic ignorance of each other's motives," where pre-marital relations are no longer supervised closely by family and community.

Third, the romantic concept of love in marriage must carry a tremendous overload of emotion engendered through success-striving. With marriage less "practical," there tends to arise a constant questioning of the extent to which one is receiving the expected emotional service: a ceaseless seeking-out of the other's motivations, with the feeling of betrayal if the other does not conform to expectations. While the shocks to success-aspiration dealt by our contracting economy make the psychic necessity of the other's fulfilling the ideal more acute, the tensions engendered outside the home make that fulfillment all the more uncertain.

Fourth, while romantic love appears to be needed in modern society in order to get people married, serving as an emotional drive that smashes past individualistic considerations of success, it cannot be depended upon to keep a marriage together through the years. The family remains, in however truncated a form, an *institution* with a certain minimum of obligations that must be met in a certain way regardless of the present emotional tone of relations between husband and wife. The tragedy of love, as Somerset Maugham has so honestly observed, is that it does not last. Marriage, as sexual-emotional interaction, in time inevitably seeks a lower level of habitual expression, and the aging mate no longer fulfills the romantic ideal. Sociologists in the field of marriage and the family have been somewhat dishonest in this regard, writing confidently of "another kind of love" which replaces the erotic euphoria of the honeymoon. Perhaps there is such a love, but it most certainly is not the kind of love that moderns have been specifically conditioned to expect in their marriage—an effortless, timeless ecstasy. And so we have the phenomenon of "romantic divorce"—if

this other person no longer fits the romantic ideal, I will retain my ideal intact, and seek another love-object. That the same failure will only be repeated with another partner is not considered, and so, in 1946, there was one divorce for every three marriages.

It is questionable whether the new freedom in marriage has appreciably raised the general level of happiness. In most cultures, and in our own historical perspective, people have not married for individual happiness or the development of their personalities, but to form a necessary basic economic unit, and the necessity of maintaining it was as unquestioned as it was unquestionable.

Interestingly enough, various schools of psychotherapy have recently been soft-pedaling the neo-Freudian injunction to allow children to develop their egos without restriction, in favor of pointing out the valuable psychological security that can derive from a child's knowledge of absolute limits to "freedom." A similar formulation has yet to be devised for the child's parents. Paradoxically, "freedom" for the individual has value, or even meaning, only in terms of some indeterminate authoritarian framework. The divorce rate does not begin to measure the amount of dissatisfaction, the wistful longing for escape, that is generated by the mere knowledge that the back door of divorce is swinging wider. (No advocacy of restricting divorce legislation is implied here. To do so would be to mistake effect for cause.) It may be that the Victorian, with all his "repressions," had the better of the argument. His marriage and family were buttressed by a no-nonsense set of community, family, and religious exactions. He was not at the same time forced to uphold an institution and impelled to "develop his own personality," i.e., fulfill individualistic cravings at the expense of that institutional structure.

MENTAL health or emotional stability (the term used is not a critical matter, being imprecise in any case) in a sociological framework, depends upon a continuity of conditioning and group-expectation: either

personal roles, goals, and self-conceptions remain fairly uniform throughout the life-history, or undergo a series of easy transpositions. The typical modern family, which contains the majority of the population and embodies the dominant social trends, rips that continuity to shreds.

Let us consider what happens in such a family—let us say, a family of the Protestant, urban, college-educated, lower-middle income group. (The training of children born to parents who can thus be characterized is so consistent as to permit prediction, in a certain range.)

The father's primary goal is success; yet he cannot use his *child* to this end. The child, far from being an economic asset as he was under rural-familistic conditions, has become a serious liability: the sheer dollar-outlay for medical care, diets, lengthening schooling, etc., represents a diversion of energy as well as funds at the very time when the father's career is in its early, and crucial, stages. This is made more painful by the feeling that the child will in all probability never contribute to his father's support.

The child also interferes with pleasures. Modern recreation is no longer designed for family-wide participation: rather, whether in the form of movies, sports events, plays, golf, bridge, tennis, dinner parties, it is designed for individual or couple participation.

And what is the role of so-called scientific child care in this complex? The child must not be spanked, parents must be patient, the child's ego development must not be curbed. The assumption of much of the literature on child rearing seems to be that the parents have a combined culinary, nursing, and psychiatric function, and nothing more. But note that in a commercial, industrial, specialized job-world, cooks, nurses, and psychiatrists are paid for what they do.

In other words, the father's duties and obligations constantly increase, while his rights diminish. An ambivalence toward his child emerges, which is more or less widespread, though very rarely admitted, even to confidants.

THE child's mother also feels somewhat ambivalent toward him. Nurtured on the romantic concept of love, possessing a success-drive only slightly less intensive than her husband's, having embarked upon a career of her own prior to marriage, or at least dallied in fantasy with the idea of a career, she is left ill-fitted for the drudgery of housecleaning, child care, and the preparation of meals. The freedom that modern household conveniences have brought her has been commonly misinterpreted as well as exaggerated. While the housewife in the past had more work to do, that work was part of a well-integrated system of household and community activities. The modern housewife, with more leisure time, still must work at a number of household tasks for which she has not been trained, for which she has no respect, and which are isolated from her social activities.

Having little to do, in or out of the home, she is her child's constant companion. So-called scientific child care enforces a ubiquitous supervision and diffused worrying over the child's health, diet, and ego development; this is complicated by the expenditure of much energy aimed at forcing early walking, toilet-training, talking, because in an intensively competitive milieu the parents are constantly comparing their own child's development with that of the neighbor's children.

Under constant supervision, with limited play area in a house touching other homes on all sides, or in an apartment, and lacking companions, the child's physiological expansiveness, fed by his boredom, persists in getting him into trouble. Similar behavior was not so likely to occur in the rural-familistic household, and even when it did, it did not constitute so much of a crisis.

Already the parents have made "love" of supreme importance in their relation to their child, theirs for him and his for them, partly because of the love complex of our time, and partly as a compensation for the many sacrifices they have made for the child, long debated before and after its arrival. The child, in turn, comes to need love desper-

ately, precisely because he has been conditioned to need it. Now, the more ambivalent the parents are towards the child, the more seriously is the "trouble" he causes them interpreted. He should not act in such a way because of the sacrifices they have made on his behalf, and the least he can do is show his gratitude by "loving" them in turn, i.e., keeping out of "trouble." When the trouble inevitably occurs, the most effective punishment imaginable is the threat to withdraw love from him. To the extent that the child's personality has been absorbed and blanketed by lack of companionship other than with his parents, he will be thrown into a panic, and will develop guilt feelings to help keep him from getting into further trouble.

BUT obedience and propitiation are not enough. The modern child, particularly the boy, having tried to escape from anxiety and guilt by blind obedience and "love" for his parents, finds he cannot stabilize his relationships with others on that basis. His play group, which may be denied him until he has reached school age, makes him feel a certain shame and inadequacy in approaching its members with his accustomed techniques. He also discovers that he is involved in competition with others—as an individual with his contemporaries, and as a representative of his family unit with other families. Before he has developed a real self-awareness he becomes part of a process of invidious comparison with other families.

But effective competition demands a certain degree of independence, firmness of purpose, perhaps aggressiveness. His earliest conditioning was toward obedience, dependence, and love, and he is still expected to exhibit these virtues within the home, but he must "do things" outside the home. In the case of the boy, the father, as the representative of the outside male world, makes this demand uncompromisingly—this, incidentally, may be one of the unsuspected sources of the so-called Oedipus complex. In any event, contradictory demands

are made on the child, and an integration of the conflicting roles is virtually impossible. Thus is laid the basis for so many self-blocking drives in modern society, and the widespread feeling of frustration and inadequacy.

In the earlier years, the girl's training tends to be not so traumatic as the boy's. Girls are still for the most part being prepared for marriage as an ultimate goal. Girls are not subjected to so much familial pressure to assume early roles of independent, aggressive action. For both sexes, however, but perhaps especially in the case of the boy, adolescence is a period of "storm and stress," not so much because of the biological changes taking place at that period, but rather because the parents received their basic life-orientation as children in a milieu that was radically different from the one the modern adolescent encounters outside the home. Thus the parents attempt to impose on the child a life-organization that is out of gear with the adolescent's outside experience. Also, the period of dependence upon parents is steadily lengthening.

The adolescent of either sex must defer sexual satisfaction and the assumption of responsible adult activities until long after the period when he is biologically and intellectually (if not emotionally) mature. This is complicated by the fact that the culture has not worked out guides for the gradual relinquishment of parental authority over children, so that a conflict tends to arise: the parents attempting to lengthen the period of parental authority, the adolescent attempting to cut it short. Since the job world has no place for the adolescent, and age at marriage is on the average increasing, he must fight out the battle on minor personal issues, such as when he must get home from the dance, the use of the family automobile, the right to "express" himself. Postponement of adult roles slows the process of emotional maturity, and represents malpreparation for marriage.

The girl's childhood may not be beset by so many contradictory familial demands as the boy's, but as she grows older, the inchoate values of "female emancipation" in-

volve her. Perhaps she won't get married. There is always the possibility of a career. In any event, she also has been caught up in the new values of individualism and success and is no longer willing to accept the subordinate role in marriage that once was unchallenged. If marriage can be used to secure a high standard of living, she "succeeds," otherwise she may be assailed by doubts. The writer has traced, in case records taken over a period of years in a university psychological clinic, the educated woman's reluctance to accept *any* marriage as a way out.

A new role is emerging for the woman in marriage, the role of equal partner, which is more acceptable to her than the traditional housewife-and-mother role. Yet, despite the growing tendency to regard marriage not as an institutional complex but as an opportunity to get something for herself, to fulfill the romantic ideal, to develop her own personality, there remains a widespread reluctance to renounce the protection and security of the older role. At the same time the bearing of children, and the domestic service performed for the husband, are unacceptable. And her husband hardly simplifies her problem. He was raised in a home which had its chronological setting two decades ago, but centuries ago in terms of social change. His recollection of his own father's role is strikingly patriarchal compared to his wife's expectations of him. He is not ready to forego the rights accruing to the patriarch though he may be perfectly willing that his wife work, assume equal responsibility in making decisions, manage family finances. And so the stage is set for a conflict of expectations.

THE acute problems of old age have belatedly received attention in modern society.* Old age was usually no problem in the rural-familistic system. The aged *gradually* relinquished activity and control in the home or on the farm. Food and space were

abundant, and they could continue until bed-ridden to perform some useful activity. Furthermore, community and religious sanctions were so uncompromising that any alternative to the aged parents living with their children was unthinkable.

But the modern job world is neither rural nor agricultural; the aging can no longer continue to be productive (a drive that is inherent in the Protestant ethic), with only a gradual decrease in work activity. In some lines of endeavor, men are now considered "old" at forty, and are haunted by the fear of being discarded. Further, the value complex has so shifted that young people no longer feel an unequivocal sense of obligation toward aged parents. Governmental agencies are planning their old-age security programs on the assumption that a growing number of persons will be unwilling to assume responsibility for their parents. Meanwhile the number entering homes for the aged mounts year by year.

This value change can partly be explained by the life situation of the married children. No longer resident on the family holding, they typically move to a city far from the parental home. They live in a small apartment where space is restricted and where there is no productive activity available for their parents. The costs of maintenance are paid with money, not by direct production on the home site, and the costs are heavy. Add to this the fact that recreational activities are no longer a matter of family-wide participation, but highly specialized in terms of narrow age groupings.

No matter what is done, the children feel either that they are making an uncalled-for sacrifice, or are guilty of ingratitude, or both. They are caught between their individualistic strivings and a set of obligations stemming from a fading tradition. And the parents, if placed in an old folks' home, feel discarded; if a common home is established, the two generations trample upon one another's toes psychologically. Under the old dispensation, the parents typically held title to family holdings until their death, and thus had a bargaining position from which they

* The present writer is deeply indebted to Dr. Otto Pollack, who has allowed him to borrow generously from an unpublished manuscript.

could retain some measure of authority. But the economic activity of the son, or son-in-law, bears no relationship whatsoever to the old people today. Yet, as is common with the old, they tend to regard their grown children as still their wards and subordinates; from the point of view of their children, on the other hand, they are expected to accept a reversal of roles, and to become the children's subordinates.

IT IS questionable that moral exhortation will change this whole picture. Family stability in the modern world (as Lewis M. Terman thoroughly demonstrated in his *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness*, 1939), as well as individual adjustment within it, are dependent upon the preservation of older patterns, since no new bases for the family have taken their place. At the same time, the socio-economic structure which was the underpinning of the older values has been too greatly modified to support an effective demand that a generation of vipers cease chasing its strange new gods. We may well have to reconcile ourselves to the fact that we will have to live, for some time to come, in a society increasingly made up of persons subjected to the process we have described.

The effect of this modern personality on social life can scarcely be imagined or contained. Politics becomes less and less the rational response of responsible individuals, and more and more a field in which some individuals attempt to discharge crippling conflicts. Political programs, fascist and otherwise, lose their rational character and become illusions appropriate to seizing the imagination of sick individuals. Psychiatrists clamor for individual therapy—but this therapy is either an effort to restore the earlier, steadily weakening authoritarian norms in one form or another, or creates an individual who sees himself as a single soul saved, in

a hell where almost everyone else is damned. In any case, changes in significant numbers of individuals can only come from social changes which are as yet in no way obvious.

To return to the Jewish group. It may be, as the writers referred to at the beginning of this article have claimed, that unique pressures have been created which reverberate in the personality of the modern Jew. Nevertheless, there are two reasons for questioning the specifically Jewish character of the problems they pose.

First, if the analysis presented above has any validity, we are dealing not with an ethnic-group phenomenon but a general cultural one.

Second, there are a number of factors that would appear to mitigate the effect these changes have had for recent immigrant groups in general and Jews in particular.

The Jews, historically, have been an urban and commercial people. The culture-wide trend in this direction does not seem as radical a break with the traditional past as it does for the Protestant, rural majority. On the other hand, observation tempts one to the generalization that the majority of middle-income Jewish family heads are spared the bureaucratic pressures described above, working as independent professional men and as small retail shop proprietors and businessmen. Most important, perhaps, Jews, despite the changes they feel so painfully, may well have been more successful in maintaining the patriarchal family through generations of urban living, and may be more successful in maintaining the old psychological patterns governing the behavior of fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, parents and children.

The evidence would seem to justify the conclusion that the prototype of the "alienated" person of our age is really the rural Protestant in the modern metropolis.

DANIEL FUCHS: ESCAPE FROM WILLIAMSBURG

The Fate of Talent in America

IRVING HOWE

ONLY a handful of devotees still remember the three novels Daniel Fuchs wrote in the mid-30's. Like so many other once-promising American writers, he lapsed into silence after a brief flare of creativity. Yet even in the few years that Fuchs devoted to serious writing he showed such a rich gift for fictional portraiture of Jewish life in the American city that, given sustained work and growth of mind, he might have written its still-uncreated *comédie humaine*. After reading Fuchs' work one wonders: What was the source of his talent and the cause of his silence, and, perhaps more important, what was the relationship between his talent and his silence?

AT THE foot of the Williamsburg Bridge in Brooklyn lies Williamsburg, a gray and dreary slum. During the years of Daniel Fuchs' adolescence and young manhood, Williamsburg was the home of the poorest of New York's Jews, a social group even less favored than those who lived in Manhattan's Lower East Side. It was the cramped and harried life of this slum that was to be the decisive, even traumatic, influence on Fuchs' sensibility. I doubt whether one can find another American writer whose image of life was so tightly bound by his adolescent experience, and whose entire creative effort was so painful a struggle to come to terms

with memories of adolescence. Even James T. Farrell, tied as his novels are to recollections of Chicago's South Side, has managed to break some of the holds of adolescent trauma and seek broader dimensions of experience.

For the adult creative imagination, memories of formative years are almost always a fascinating but destructive attraction. The writer who has not thoroughly thought out his relationship to the world tends to make such memories the center of his work rather than an absorbed part of his total perception. As one picks up the novels that Fuchs wrote during several summers while freed from his job as substitute teacher in a Brighton Beach public school, it seems almost as if they are still marked with the fingerprints of his adolescence, as if the heat and sour smells of the Williamsburg summer still cling to their pages.

SUMMER IN WILLIAMSBURG, Fuchs' first novel, appeared in 1934, when he was still in his early twenties. Influenced by—but far more subtle than—the prevalent “proletarian” school, it is a naturalistic genre novel in which Fuchs' relationship to his youthful experience is the major theme. As a result, he is greatly absorbed in the novel's setting, the physical environment and sense impressions.

In the summer Williamsburg is filthy, grimy, sticky; its streets are heavy with odors from tired bodies, rotting tenements, and inappropriate cooking; and yet it is ablaze with frantic, purposeless activity. Its young people scurry around, seeking ways to escape but soon reaching the bitter conclusion that in the years of depression one can do everything but escape; ultimately one must return to the tenements. That, insisted Fuchs with

IN THE life and work of Daniel Fuchs, who in the 1930's published three brilliant novels about Jewish life in New York's Williamsburg, IRVING HOWE sees a parable of the fate of talent in present-day America. Mr. Howe was born in New York in 1920 and has contributed to *Partisan Review*, *Tomorrow*, *Politics*, and other magazines. His article “Spruceton Jewry Adjusts Itself” appeared in the June COMMENTARY.

a self-tormenting passion, is the law of Williamsburg life, the trap of its youth. From the first word of *Summer in Williamsburg* to the end of his last novel, Fuchs was obsessed with this unvarying theme: escape and the trap.

Offhand, it must be granted, this hardly seems a promising theme. It stirs unhappy recollections of such works as *Jews Without Money* and *Street Scene*, in which sentimentality softens social perceptions into bathos. But Fuchs seemed to sense that a retrospective sentimentality about the Jewish slum, even the sentimentality of total rejection, was possible only if one could look back on the slum with complacency—that is, if one fully accepted the life one had attained to outside the slum. This complacency he could never know, and so it was his desperate insecurity that saved him from sentimentality.

Through Philip Hayman, his autobiographical hero, Fuchs expressed his ambiguous relationship to Williamsburg and the world of grubbing and grasping for which Williamsburg stood. Contrary to the *Erziehungsroman* formula, Philip is not a precocious intellectual; he is only an earnest young man who cannot take his experience for granted. He is aware of conflicts of will, but he thinks of his will as something apart from himself, something given and predetermined. Convinced that man is helpless before the miseries thrust upon him, Philip feels wearied by the anticipation of a life he has not yet lived. All that is left to him, then, is dignified passivity.

Each of the characters in *Summer in Williamsburg* is a point of reference by which to define Philip's situation: his ridiculous alter-ego, Cohen, yowling about life in a way that Philip is too wise or weary to follow; his scrupulously honest father whose morality makes him a helpless prisoner in the Williamsburg jungle; his brother Harry, who decides to earn a living rather than be decent; and his uncle Papravel, a racketeer who has travelled to the end of the amoral road. Each represents a possible path in life—and in different ways each is a trap.

PHILIP might fancy himself a detached onlooker, but how could he avoid participating in the life of Williamsburg or succumbing to its values? Trapped in the dilemma of those sufficiently sensitive to reject the Williamsburg pattern but not sufficiently perceptive to understand it, Philip is doomed to the neither-nor agony of the intelligent middlebrow.

Yet a beginning has to be made somewhere: "That was the choice, he thought, Papravel or his father. Papravel, smoking cigars, piled up money and glowed with sweat and happiness, while his father sat with his feet on the window-sill in the dimness of a Williamsburg flat. . . . He was heading in his father's direction, honest, good, and kind, but poor. . . . Look at him, Philip said, he's old, he's skinny, and all he has after all the years is a cigarette and a window."

This was all that integrity and seriousness brought: a cigarette and a window. But if the meaning of Williamsburg life was that "people in tenements lived in a circle without significance, one day the duplicate of the next until the end, which occurred without meaning," how was the chronicler of Williamsburg to end his book? What could constitute its inevitable climax?

Fuchs didn't know. And so he had to fall back on a *deus ex machina*; he set one of the Williamsburg tenements on fire (in itself a delightful idea) and allowed it to kill off Cohen. Having thus been rid of his preposterous conscience-censor, Philip could now follow his brother's path, but wearily and without enthusiasm. "Philip, waiting for the years to come to see what would happen to him, went to his dinner."

PHILIP's dilemma in life is but a refraction of Fuchs' dilemma as a writer. In *Summer in Williamsburg* Fuchs examined his experience with a fascinated conscientiousness bred in loathing, and in the end he had to admit his helplessness before it. Like Philip, he was not an intellectual; he could not enjoy the solace of comprehension, of substituting a mental ordering for an actual

control of the events of his life. All he knew was that his experience was *there*, palpable and insistent, and that there was no way out. What then could you do with an experience that gripped and choked you, that slowly ripped you apart and even showed you—in the flesh of your elders—a portrait of your inevitable decline? You could, it is true, write about it, you could compile the human “dictionary of Williamsburg”; but did that exorcise its devil, did that remove the inescapable “marks of weakness, marks of woe”?

This was the dilemma that led to the novel's breakdown, to the resort to melodrama. As a novel, despite frequent missteps and callow passages, it is rich with signs of talent. Fuchs wrote with a highly dramatic flare for characterization and for dialogue that is acoustically true and psychologically revealing. Yet the book ended on a note of impotence: a triple impotence: before life, which Philip could not begin, let alone meet; before thought, which Philip-Fuchs could not formulate into a usable means of ordering life; and before art, which Fuchs, in the final pages of the book, found insufficient “to give the completely truthful impression, the exact feeling.”

In its ultimate meaning this immature but significant novel was reduced to a cry for help. How escape, how get away from Williamsburg?

TO THIS question Fuchs' second novel, *Homage to Blenholt*, gave a passing answer. Where *Summer* is intense, somber, and literal, *Homage* is irreverent, gay, and fanciful. If the experience of Williamsburg cannot be grasped and controlled, perhaps it can be laughed away.

Most of *Summer*'s technical difficulties are overcome in this second novel. The dialogue is bright and witty—marred only by an occasional streak of mockery which suggests that its gaiety is not quite spontaneous. The characterization is complex and free of the naturalistic grotesquerie of *Summer*. Most impressive of all is the novel's top-speed ninety-page “overture” in

which Fuchs' imagination is in full command.

The novel's characters appear in rapid order. Max Balkan, the *shlemiel*-hero, is a unification of Philip Hayman and Cohen of *Summer*: he is decent and a dreamer. He seeks get-rich schemes in order to reach the glory he values more than wealth; he dreams of chains of hot chicken-soup stands, formulas for bottling onion juice, plans for announcing movie programs over the telephone. As the novel opens he is on his way to the funeral of Brooklyn's Commissioner of Sewers, Blenholt. Here, muses Max, was a man who surmounted the mediocrity of this “flat age,” and sought heroism and danger, if only by building a political machine of gangsters and job-holders. In his own way Blenholt found glory and greatness—a Tamburlane risen in Brooklyn. As Max drags his friends to the funeral, he muses over Tamburlane's mighty words, in which he sees a warrant of his own future:

... we will reign as consuls of the earth
And mighty kings will be our senators.

Flanking Max Balkan in the company of the meek is his small-fry counterpart, Hesh-ey, who has also discovered that to the tender-souled life offers only blows. Like Max, Hesh-ey is in love with the world of daydreams and the fancies of the life of play.

Max's adult friends are equally hopeless *luftmenshen*: Coblenz, a naive cynic who is completely at the mercy of his sensations, and Munves, a naive innocent whose joy in life is to find errors in the footnotes of the great etymologists. And finally there is Max's father, who, though he now carries a sandwich sign for a beauty parlor, claims once to have found glory as a Shakespearean actor in Yiddish. As he reminisces about his role as a Yiddish King Lear, he is interrupted by his wife's jeers: “Mr. Fumfotch,” she calls him.

Are the men meek, impractical dreamers? Then the women are proud realists who know that they have to cope with Williams-

burg economics. Mrs. Balkan feels herself surrounded by gentle lunatics who don't know where the next dollar is coming from—and she grimly tells herself that it is she who has to keep guard in *this* world. Equally hard-headed are her daughter, Rita, who finds that the only way to snare Munves is to teach him "close dancing," and Ruth, Max's girl, the sort of female who intends to perpetuate the race no matter what dreams men indulge in. Ruth embodies the principle of survival, and all of nature and society are her allies. Against this array Max is helpless.

For Fuchs, women are the this-worldly sex, the child-bearers who chain men to earth. His novels are disturbed by a barely hidden undercurrent of antipathy towards women, who seem to him anything but the romantic sex. They are rather the personification of the earth force, the champions of the reality principle: they bind men to the sort of life that ends with a cigarette and a window.

ONCE having established the setting of his novel, Fuchs drives it to a swift dénouement. Max goes to Blenholt's funeral, where instead of glory he acquires a bloody nose, a trophy of innocence for chivalrously interfering in a dispute. His final defeat is complete and unmistakable. When he receives a letter from a company expressing interest in his idea for bottling onion juice, his hopes soar: Max Balkan, onion king! But the company has already been bottling onion juice for years and all it offers him is a three-pound bag of onions in gratitude for his interest. . . .

Reality, or what Williamsburg takes for reality, is vindicated. Max decides to get a job as a twelve-dollars-a-week shipping clerk; Munves is to abandon etymology for a delicatessen store and marriage with Rita; Mrs. Balkan is content. As for "Mr. Fumfotch," what can he say? He tells himself: "Max was dead already for now he would live by bread alone. . . ."

Fuchs allows only one concession to the meek: little Heshey gains a victory. In an

exuberant scene, he traps his tormentor, the bully Chink, in a dumbwaiter and bombards him with rotten grapefruit. But once having impressed Chink with his shrewdness, Heshey proposes a predatory alliance of his brain with Chink's brawn. Even if the meek triumph momentarily, they must forego the purity of motive that had sustained their meekness. In the very act of triumph their meekness sours into pride, and their tenderness into arrogance.

Though it had begun as a lark, *Homage to Blenholt* ends on a note of quiet despair and bitterness. You may daydream yourself out of Williamsburg for a few minutes, you may fancy yourself Tamburlane, but in the end you must become a shipping clerk or a substitute teacher.

BY THE time Fuchs sat down to write his third and last novel, his conflict of values seemed largely to have been resolved. As a novel, *Low Company* is his most skilled piece of work—intricately and surely plotted, its prose efficient, and its characters immediately believable. Yet, having gained mastery of his medium, Fuchs used it in a disturbing way. *Low Company* is too slick, too flashily sophisticated; it has neither the earnest bewilderment of *Summer* nor the high-pitched humor of *Homage*.

Max Balkan and his friend Coblenz are now metamorphosed into Moe Karty, a wretched little man obsessed with gambling. Losing the money he stole from his wife's family, and wasting his days telephoning bets from a candy store in Neptune (Brighton) Beach, Karty represents still another moral bludgeon aimed by Fuchs against those who, like himself, are tempted to rise from the earth.

Desperate for gambling money, Karty approaches an ugly brothel-keeper, Shubunka, for a loan. Shubunka refuses; he has his own troubles, for a large gangster syndicate threatens his business and his life. It is the irony of *Low Company*—possible only because Fuchs, having decided not to become a literary Max Balkan, has largely withdrawn his sympathy from his charac-

ters—that its only humane words come from this brothel-keeper: “He sat there at the dirty table, his head drooping, and his expression showed that he knew well this was the ungrateful way of the world. It was bitter and low, humans were always miserable in their relations with one another, but it was an old tale, he knew it and could not be shocked.”

When Shubunka begs mercy from the thugs who are driving him out of Neptune Beach, he cries: “We must not be like animals to one another! We are human beings living together in this world.” It is a significant comment on Fuchs’ view of his characters and the world they live in that the ultimate point of these words is to defend small-scale against large-scale prostitution. In the world where all men form a low and filthy company, such sentiments are merely the ironic underside of all that is low and filthy.

As FUCHS drives his novel to its bitter end, he seems always to be saying: *See what a world I come from and from which I must escape.* For a moment he does pause to allow a minor character to reflect that “it was not enough to call them low and pass on.” That remark, however, is only an echo of the past, of the voices of the meek, Philip Hayman and Cohen, Max Balkan and “Mr. Fumfotch.” The author of *Low Company* can do little else but pass on. For he has at last discovered the great secret of the universe, the one surpassing truth that will bring him peace and allow him to escape from Williamsburg—all human beings are *dreck*.

Low Company begins with a message from a Yom Kippur prayer: “We have trespassed, we have been faithless, we have robbed . . . we have committed iniquity, we have wrought unrighteousness. . . .” Must not the disabused Fuchs have wondered if the forgiveness that Yom Kippur offers was not also a consolation that the trespassers and the faithless, the robbers and the unrighteous wrought in behalf of their own comfort?

IN ALL three of Fuchs’ novels one feels, even in the gayest parts of *Homage to Blenholt*, a sense of oppression and constriction, as if one were in an over-crowded and airless room. This atmosphere is suggested by a series of central though unexplicated images that the novels leave in one’s mind: the dense airless room, the heavy human body aching to rise in flight but anchored to the graceless earth, the throat gasping for fresh air but doomed to expire from the fumes of its own decay.

These images, of course, are suggested by the locale of Fuchs’ work—they are psychic equivalents, as it were, of his portrait of Williamsburg; but they are also the result of his entire outlook. For him, alas, Williamsburg is the world: he knows and can imagine no other, either in fact or anticipation, in society or the mind. This is it, a low company.

Unlike such a writer as Delmore Schwartz, who makes of Jewishness a symbol of the modern situation, Fuchs reduced all of life to a Jewish slum. But a gifted writer could not maintain this view for very long. A mediocre writer might have been able to continue writing about Williamsburg as if his relationship to it were a subject worth indefinite extension. But Fuchs’ talent was so large that it forced him to see that adolescence and its environment were not enough for a writer who wished to go beyond the “proletarian” novel, or the local-color portrait of the Jewish slum, or the formularized *Erziehungsroman*.

His talent confronted him with problems that his mind could not cope with. No one who had seen as much as he, no one who had seen it all with depressing clarity, could long persist in either curiosity or compassion unless he could sustain and temper it with understanding.

But understanding Fuchs never had; he was too close to Williamsburg to relate it to other areas of life—physical or moral or intellectual—and in the end he made Williamsburg the entirety of life. That left him no recourse but escape, for how could he continue to face the continued chal-

lenge of Williamsburg, a challenge that apparently would not let him rest, unless he had some sustaining and relieving vision of life? If *Summer* was the statement of a dilemma, and *Homage* the attempt to escape or surmount its choices, then *Low Company* was a resolution of that dilemma by surrender. As Albert Halper wrote, "Fuchs is a man with a burden. I do not envy him . . . he is a child of sorrow."

LOW COMPANY, with its curiously tender cynicism, was Fuchs' last word. There is a revealing incident in the novel in which an old man, one of those old-fashioned Jewish intellectuals who are now almost an extinct breed, spills a pail of water from his window on a crowd below in order to break up a street fight. When the crowd stares up, the old man takes "advantage of the occasion to deliver a lecture, impassionate and burning, on the decencies of human life. Everyone quite forgot the fight to hoot and yell at the intellectual."

As he developed his skills, Fuchs could, with increasing frequency, do just what he wanted—but what he wanted became less worth doing. He enlarged his technique only to narrow his mind. As a result, those themes of his first two novels that seemed most significant became withered and barren in his last work. The theme of conflict between the meek and the proud that so sustained *Homage to Blenholt*; the undeluded examination of adolescence and the tense pounding at the walls of an environment that were so impressive in *Summer*; the theme of struggle between realistic women and imaginative men that deepened the meaning of both novels—all of these were

reduced to a minor-keyed misanthropy in *Low Company*. In his first two novels he had tried to develop themes and construct images that might carry his work beyond himself and to the shores of some general meaning; but in his last novel he acknowledged, skilfully and sadly, that his quest for meaning was at an end. He had searched but had not found. . . .

In the late 30's Fuchs went to Hollywood to work as a script writer, and there he has remained ever since. (There seems little likelihood that he will write *the* novel on Hollywood for which his friends hoped and his talents fitted him so perfectly.) It would be absurd to speak of his having "sold out" to Hollywood, for Fuchs was defeated in himself before he went to Hollywood and had he not been so defeated he would most probably not have gone there. Yet one who respects his talent cannot but wonder if he is aware of the final irony in his career: for what is Hollywood but Williamsburg in technicolor?

Perhaps the most gifted of all the American writers who dealt with Jewish experience, Fuchs was caught in the trap that awaits every artist whose talent is not nurtured by a developing and enlarging perception, and whose relationship to a world he cannot tolerate is not tempered by the pleasure of understanding it. In this sense, then, one can say that the very largeness of Fuchs' talent drove him more quickly to silence. As William Troy has remarked: "Art is not intellect alone; but without intellect art is not likely to emerge beyond the plane of perpetual immaturity." And Fuchs at least had the good sense to prefer silence to perpetual immaturity.

A "LIBERAL GENTILE" LOOKS AT HIMSELF

One Man's Nuremberg Trial

GEORGE WELTNER

IT IS almost two years now since Goering committed suicide in Nuremberg. It would have served no purpose then if I had immediately confessed my peculiar reaction to his "escape." I would almost certainly have been misunderstood. In the interval, however, there has been a growing recognition that anti-Semitic feelings may exist quite apart from conscious and deliberately held anti-Semitic attitudes, and that these feelings are often stubbornly rooted in men who would consciously prefer to live without them. This recognition has led to questions about the effectiveness of certain efforts to cope with prejudice, both here and abroad, and to a demand for more study and more facts. So there may be a little more willingness now to listen to an unpleasant testimony—on the assumption that all the facts have not yet come in, nor all the morals been pointed.

I was glad when Goering escaped the hangmen. Once, during the last week of the trial, I dreamt that I was about to be

In the midst of an unprecedented flood of propaganda against anti-Semitism, there has been little serious effort to examine its impact on its chosen object—the well-intentioned Gentile. GEORGE WELTNER here tries to explain—using himself as case material—why he believes it is not enough to expose error and to evoke shame. Guilt, he suggests, is not a useful emotion, if we are seriously thinking of personal regeneration; it is understanding that is needed, and a pointing up of specific paths toward more civilized attitudes. Mr. Weltner's observations may help to make clear the source of that peculiar lifelessness that characterizes novels and movies aimed at counteracting anti-Semitism. Mr. Weltner was born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1910, and was graduated from Cornell University. He has taught sociology at Temple University, and at present lives in New York City.

hanged myself. Long after I woke up, I still felt a bitter resentment against the judges—Lawrence, Biddle, and all the rest. I felt that they were my judges, too.

When the executions were announced, I switched compulsively from the *Times* to the *News*. I had to look at the pictures, the bodies, the dead faces, ropes still around their necks. I studied them with the fascination and dull incredulity of a drunken man looking at himself in the mirror. Here the blood on the chin, here the bloated nose, here the slack, open mouth. This is what happens to bad men. There you are. Look!

Goering, at least, wasn't hanged. He fooled them. I owe him a debt of gratitude for that. He gave me a little hope that I, too, might escape the full force of the world's wrath for being—not as bad as Goering, to be sure—but very bad, nevertheless.

When the good people of the world accused the Nazis of breaking the laws of humanity, I accused them, too, and I was glad enough to add moral indignation to fear as a motive for fighting. But when the angry killings of warfare were over and the quiet killings of punishment began, I grew uneasy. It's one thing to feel that you are good enough to stop men from harming you and from harming your country. It's quite another to feel that you are good enough to sit in final judgment upon them and to mete out sentences of death by hanging. There is no doubt that Goering was a very bad man. But the question is, how good am I? How good can I be?

ALL during the feverish growth of Nazism in Germany, and even after I was involved in the war against it, I was secretly quite indifferent to the persecution of the Jews in Europe. I was aware, without being

too much disturbed by it, of a sharp contrast between my inner apathy and the mounting indignation of the press. Of course, as a self-defined liberal I didn't approve of the murder of Jews, nor, as far as I knew, of anti-Semitism in any form. Yet I could not muster the spontaneous indignation that I felt was required of me. The feeling of which I was most conscious was a satisfaction in my own civilized restraint in contrast to the ugly indulgence of the Nazis. What I felt was a kind of moral snobbery. Although I sensed only vaguely, if at all, that the Nazis were fulfilling some of my own crueler fantasies, I discovered that I was keenly appreciative of the fact that their extreme badness made my own moderate virtue seem very bright indeed. Their brutality was almost a pleasure because it made me seem quite nice.

It was especially gratifying, during this period, to associate with Jews. Ever since my university days many of my best friends (not just some of them) had been Jews. Whether these earlier friendships contained patronizing and other spurious elements I cannot say. I do know that the threat of Nazism and its racial ideology provided me with a new sensation. I could now feel like a potentially very dangerous animal who by great and virtuous effort of will refrained from devouring a weaker species. I could condemn the Germans to my Jewish friends and, at the same time, secretly enjoy the same power to destroy which I, unlike the Germans, kept so well under control.

If I had not, to a certain extent, identified myself with the Nazis, I would not have felt a special pleasure in acting differently. Crimes alien to one's nature leave one cold and, perhaps, a little disgusted. Virtue and restraint have a personal meaning only in the face of temptation. There is no doubt that in some obscure, sub-intellectual way I was tempted; and there is no doubt that, in an equally obscure way, I was grateful to the Nazis for expressing my latent sadism and for carrying the full burden of guilt while I, complacently conscious of having been transformed by their theories

and actions into a potentially terrible "Nordic," could enjoy the paradox of being gentle and kind.

When the Nazi power collapsed, so also did my false sense of virtue. It was suddenly no longer a remarkable achievement to be a tame "Nordic." They were all tame now—or in captivity. My virtue could no longer be compared, favorably, to their wickedness; once again it had to be measured against accusing, absolute standards. The Nuremberg trial symbolized these standards, gave them a new and frightening authority. Goering symbolized my guilt.

I wanted to be punished, but I wanted to be understood, too. I wanted to sit in the prisoners' box and be scolded and called names. But, finally, after the scolding and the name-calling, I wanted to be told that I was, after all, a man much like other men, that my "crimes" of thought and feeling were part of a common human heritage, and that even my sadism could be traced to frustrations and longings which men all over the world would recognize. I hoped that at some point in the proceedings the judges would nod their heads sadly and say, "Yes, I know."

I waited patiently, but I waited in vain for them to tell me how I had become so bad, why the surface of my good will was so often cracked and ruptured by unconscious malice, what it was that I wanted so badly—and could not get simply by being good. A wise judge should be able to tell you these things. He should be able to guide you tenderly and relentlessly to the springs of crime, your crime, and make you cry out in the pain and the relief of self-knowledge. But these judges only told me that I was guilty. I knew that already. For me this was just a beginning. For them it was the end.

THE major trial at Nuremberg is long past, and I am no longer hanged in my dreams. But lesser hangmen here in America—moralists, journalists, and novelists—aware, no doubt, that I was only hanged in effigy, are holding countless trials of their own.

These are the trials by book at which I, as a confessed sinner, am invited to recognize myself in adult villains who have had no past, no boyhood, no problems—in cruel acts that have had no roots in cruel experience—and in warped ideas that have had no painful birth in the minds and hearts of men. In *Gentleman's Agreement* I am all the elegant and shadowy purveyors of the "Thing," deprived of all feeling except constant self-congratulation over not being Jewish. My crime is a petty, habit-forming conspiracy of exclusion, something I should remember not to do any more because it hurts some people who are also people. A string around my finger might help—if I weren't so vain and Protestant and stupid. In *Kingsblood Royal* I appear on the scene already bled and minced into an abstraction, endowed only with the ability to chant through a long and eerie vocabulary of synonyms for Negro. My death sentence seems anticlimactic. In *Crossfire* I am the strange, uncaused soldier who beats the Jew to death, and who moves in an irreversible progression from crime to crime until he is shot in the back by a detective.

The soldier, at least, was alive, and I wanted eagerly to know what went on before, how he became an anti-Semite and a murderer—who his family was, whether he was loved or unloved, whether he ever wept at night and wished he were dead. I wanted to know, in the deepest sense, the story of his life. An effort so to understand him would have been an act of supreme kindness to me. It would have descended upon me like a blessing, and I would have felt more at home in a world where such understanding, or such efforts at understanding, could exist. Feeling more at home, I would have been less easily moved to fear and malice, and the purpose of this "trial" would have been, in some degree, achieved. But evidently he was not considered worth the trouble. It was natural for me to conclude that I wasn't considered worth the trouble either.

In none of these "trials" am I treated as a person whose past can be understood or

whose future is touched by hope. There are no degrees of guilt. A vagrant feeling, say the moralists, is the same as an expressed opinion; an expressed opinion is the same as an act; an act is a crime; and the crime is murder! This is the logic of their prosecution. I have only to admit to one small fault and I am immediately caught in this progression and turned out at the other end a murderer. I learn nothing; I understand nothing. I am merely sentenced to death.

Perhaps they intend to shame and frighten me into a state of innocence. Perhaps they'd like to start in me such a trembling, such an agony of self-reproach that I will perform a miracle of fission, split away from my bad self and join the growing ranks of those who point indignantly at others. But it's too late now for me to escape into innocence in any such simple way—even under the pressure of fear. I have already acknowledged too much; I am already too strongly and too consciously implicated in my own badness. Although there are many elements in myself which I am ready and eager to change, I cannot wholly reject or obliterate any of them. To this extent I have become protective even of my sins. I will neither cast them out nor be driven away from them by threats. It would be easier for me, at this point, to seek relief in the other direction, by being defiantly bad. It would be easier for me to reject my virtues, break out in a fine rash of biases—and just relax and say to hell with it.

But I'm not looking for an easy way—either to be bad or to be good. I simply want to acknowledge myself fairly and without exaggeration, and then try to change from the center outwards, through all of my parts—slowly, without being driven.

Perhaps I did myself an injustice in assuming that I was a potential Goering, that my mild prejudices made me a potential murderer. It was a natural assumption to make then, during the trial at Nuremberg, when I was filled with the horror of what the Nazis had done. And it was natural that the assumption should be confirmed by the later "trials" by book with

their fearsome device of equating all prejudice with murder. But now I am ready to draw a distinction of degree between us—between myself and Goering. I've got to, in self-defense. In the hope of redemption, I pleaded guilty and placed myself at the mercy of every court I could find. But the courts have shown no mercy, no inclination to understand and forgive and teach. So I'll have to try to be a kinder and wiser judge myself.

SO FAR, it's merely a personal, psychological question with me, a question of getting along with myself, of not having too many nightmares, of reducing an intolerable burden of guilt. I will have to stop condemning myself for the minute, internal reactions of pride and prejudice which identify me as a member (or as having been a member) of a Protestant American community. I must recognize that I am not all of a piece, that I respond to people and situations on different and sometimes inconsistent levels. On the adult level I side with the weak against the strong, with the oppressed against the oppressor, with the way of democracy against the way of the tyrant. On this level I *believe* in the sides I take—I'm no hypocrite, thinking one thing and doing another. But there's a more primitive level, a heritage of provincial responses far less amenable to criticism and change than adult beliefs. This is the level at which, in earlier years, I unresistingly absorbed the prejudices of my family group.

Expression of these prejudices, or, at least, implicit agreement with them, was a condition of membership in what was then, unquestionably, the society of the "best" people. It was, in fact, the only thinkable society; the mere thought of expulsion was as frightening as death. If certain evidences of membership were lacking, such as wealth or long native lineage, the expression of the right prejudices became relatively more important. They acquired a magical quality; they opened doors that otherwise might have remained closed; in adversity and in failure they defined me stubbornly and staunchly

as a superior individual. They were useful things to have, these prejudices—indispensable, in fact, in the society of my youth, to personal security and self-respect.

In spite of long exposure to social science and liberal thought, I have some of them still. A small residue remains unresponsive to the solvent of intellectual analysis. Especially when I feel tired and defeated, I tend to reclaim, half-consciously, my membership in the society of the "best" people and draw what little solace I can from the feeling they give me that I "belong," and that my totem superiority is invulnerable to the attacks of an alien world. At such times, not knowing why or by whom I am attacked, I retreat, emotionally, behind the defenses of the first society of which I was a member, and from behind these defenses I warily survey the outside world, hoping to identify the aggressor as someone not too powerful to strike down. I know these responses are irrational, but, unfortunately, neither self-accusation nor accusation by others can uproot them. The best I can do now, until some chemistry of growth makes a bigger man of me, is to recognize them, confess them, and keep them from touching any person unkindly by word or deed.

I say it's only a personal, psychological problem because I know I'd never participate in an American version of a fascist movement. I know in advance what the temptation would be, and I am prepared to resist it. I know, too, what the rewards would be, and I know that I wouldn't enjoy them. On the other hand—and this should worry the guardians of tolerance—I'm not sure that I'd fight on the other side with the kind of dedication required of me by my adult beliefs.

The people on the good side, the vocal ones, anyway, have been much more skillful in exposing and condemning than in understanding and curing. They have made me well aware that my prejudices are irrational, but they have failed utterly to communicate to me the process by which prejudice ceases to be a *need*.

How am I now to serve the needs which

I have been serving by racial pride and ill-will? What reconciled *them*, emotionally, to the unrewarding doctrine that, in the eyes of God, all men are created equal? And how did they learn to accept objective, competitive tests as a measure of their worth—when they could so easily have remained superior to such tests? They never tell me how, and they leave me with the irritating impression that they have simply created for themselves a new kind of "natural" superiority, a new way of being effortlessly better than the rest of us. They don't make me feel that we are struggling through this business together and that we are all having a hard time squaring our past—and our present—selves with our social conscience and our adult knowledge.

It's not enough, they say, to have definitely rejected the lure of political and racial fascism. It is not enough that in all my overt acts and in most of my impulses I am a good democrat. I must go farther. I must purge myself even of vagrant feelings of superiority and bias, and I must reject those in whom I detect such feelings. Now this may be an easy assignment for a man who doesn't like his family or the friends of his boyhood, but it's asking a little too much of one whose parents have been reasonably good to him and who still depends on the friendship of men he grew up with. My family and my boyhood friends are not that bad. And I am not that good. I can move away from them a little, but I can't afford to lose them entirely.

I resent the apparent ease with which my liberal advisers have accomplished all of these separations. I am uncomfortable in their presence. I am ashamed to be honest

with them. This isn't a good way to feel towards people you know are right, is it? It's not good when you want to get away from them and relax with some unregenerate provincial who takes it for granted that you prefer Protestants to Catholics, Gentiles to Jews, and whites to any other race.

It's not good—and it's certainly not the effect intended by prosecutor Jackson, by novelists Lewis and Hobson, and by a host of other righteous fighters against prejudice. But the plain truth is that, until the racial moralists present themselves to me more fully as men who are troubled with themselves as well as with others, I shall continue to need the approval of my imperfect friends more than theirs.

This, as clearly as I can tell it, is the story of my reaction to the Nuremberg Trial and to the many literary trials in which prejudice is condemned for the benefit of the American people. It is the story of a thwarted search for my own image, for the one compassionately presented case I might recognize as my own. It is also a story of self-defense—of resistance against the two cruelly unqualified choices which every such trial demands of the defendant: a plea of complete innocence on the one hand, or a plea of utter guilt on the other. I refused to accept either alternative, because neither would have told the truth. Instead, I made a third choice. I decided to present so clearly and understandably my inability to make either plea that I would cease, in fact, to be a defendant at all but would become, rather, the spokesman of many men like myself who have learned, as I have, that their cases can never be settled in courts of law—nor in books that resemble courts of law.

TROUBLED IRAQ: KEYSTONE OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Disorder and Discontent Threaten Anglo-American Aims

JON KIMCHE

OIL is to Iraq what sex-appeal is to a woman; without it Iraq would have little attraction for the outside world. But with her overflowing endowments in this direction, it is understandable why she has been, above all others, the country which the Foreign Office had considered most suitable to be Britain's chosen friend in the Middle East. This being so, it is almost incredible that the British should have blundered into becoming the pet bogey of the Iraqis. Mr. Bevin would have had the shock of his life had he been with me touring the country barely six weeks after the signing of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty at Portsmouth, granting special privileges to the British in Iraq. Not even in Palestine have I met such universal and uninhibited anti-British sentiment.

The younger British officials dotted about the country, who come into contact with the people and therefore have no influence in matters of policy, have no illusions about the situation; but they occupy such low positions in the foreign service hierarchy that their existence is probably not even known in London. These young men, who have grown up in the refreshingly outspoken school of the last war, "which knew not Lawrence," would like the British govern-

ment to go to the Iraqis and say—in the words of one such British official: "We do not like you, we do not like your country, we do not like your climate, and we do not like your politics; but we do love your oil. And for the sake of your oil, we will put up with you, with your country, and with your politics; but please let's not pretend otherwise." And this is also the view of the great majority of Iraqis. "The British do not like us any more than we like them," they will tell you again and again. "It's our oil they want; why fool ourselves?"

Insofar as the British have noticed signs of unpopularity—and they could not very well fail to notice the opposition which resulted in the non-ratification of the Portsmouth Treaty—they attribute this state of affairs to a small clique of agitators, inspired by the Communists and Russians on the Left and by the supporters of Rashid Ali and the Istaqlal Party on the extreme Right. These people, according to Embassy—and Foreign Office—opinion, have exploited the existing economic misery by putting all the blame on Britain; it cannot be considered more than a passing phase. (The Foreign Office always finds it difficult to take popular movements in other countries seriously.)

Actually, the situation in Iraq is much more serious than this explanation would allow—serious for the British, for the Americans, and, indeed, for the entire Middle East. Iraq is far more exposed than Palestine; more than any other country of the Fertile Crescent, Iraq is a weak link in the chain forged to bind the Middle East to the Anglo-American powers; internally and externally, Iraq has become a danger to the Anglo-American orientation of the Middle East. For Iraq is the first country of the

On the political chess-board that is the Middle East, with Arab nationalism, Zionism, and the great powers struggling for advantage, Iraq is a key piece. JON KIMCHE, an experienced political analyst with an intimate knowledge of the Middle East, wrote this report on Iraq after a recent visit—not his first—to that country. Mr. Kimche was until recently managing editor of the *London Tribune*, and is now a free-lance correspondent in the Middle East. He wrote the article "Middle-East Moves and Counter-Moves" in the March COMMENTARY. He was born in St. Gall, Switzerland, in 1909.

Middle East to move into a distinctly revolutionary situation—which is emphasized by her proximity to the Soviet Union and by the presence inside of Iraq of discontented minorities ready to become the active instruments of opposition to the governing class and the dynasty.

To investigate this situation closely is no mere academic exercise: hot on the heels of the British debacle in Iraq have come the Americans, bringing with them their own prescription on how to make friends of the Iraqis. For, like the British, the American State Department considers Iraq the keystone of its policy in the Middle East. But while the Americans are very conscious of the British mistakes, they regard rather lightly the perils of their own course.

THE Saleh Jabr Government, which signed the Treaty of Portsmouth with the British on February 15, was overthrown immediately, after the sanguinary "Battle of the Bridge" in the center of Bagdad, when thirty-six demonstrators and an unknown number of police were killed. A new government was formed the following day by Mohammed-al-Sadr, a respected religious leader who was, however, only a figurehead for the more activist members of the new Cabinet, who were chosen mainly for their known opposition to British influences and included for the first time since the war the leader of the Istaqlal Party, Mahdi Kubba, who became Minister of Supply. Kubba had been closely associated with Rashid Ali in 1941 in the pro-Nazi revolt against the British. He has not changed his views, and his presence in the Cabinet is a significant measure of the decline of British influence and the extremism of popular sentiment.

The new government, which was essentially the product of a popular upheaval, bowed low before the popular will and has not stopped bowing since. It refused to protect the police and even punished those who were held responsible for killing the demonstrators in the "Battle of the Bridge." It took no action against the students and others who had counter-attacked the police

and who dumped some of them into the Tigris flood waters. As a result, the police lost all authority and made no further attempts to interfere with the almost daily demonstrations. When demonstrators or strikers marched down Bagdad's main Rashid Street, the police faded away. Pickets squatted with impunity at the busiest intersections and all traffic was diverted. "The Street" became all-powerful in Iraq. In the course of one week the demonstrators successfully demanded the dismissal of an English schoolmistress, the cancellation of the visit of the Transjordan Prime Minister to Bagdad, and the withdrawal of an invitation that had been sent to King Abdullah to visit Bagdad.

Nor is this situation confined to the capital. "The Street" rules in the Kurdish capital of Sulamanyia in northern Iraq, in Erbil, a mixed center of Kurds and Arabs, and in Kirkuk and Mosul, the oil towns. The first of Lenin's famous three requisites for revolution—the disintegration of governmental authority—is obviously at hand in Iraq.

THE second of Lenin's three requisites—the existence of mass discontent against the government and the ruling groups—has also reached the point of fulfillment. The governments of Iraq change with great frequency, but they do not alter much. In the past twenty-six years there have been fifty-two governments—two a year; in the past five years there have been eleven foreign ministers. It is an accepted maxim that no government should outstay its normal span of six months.

In periods of crisis this tendency becomes doubly acute, and during the first four months of this year Iraq was faced with a particularly unpleasant situation. As a result of mismanagement by the government and corruption in high places, 170,000 tons of barley were exported from Iraq during the last year, in addition to an unknown but considerable quantity of wheat which was smuggled out of the country. But in the North the rains were poor and followed

by locusts. One day the government awoke to the fact that the harvest had brought in rather less than the normal and in some areas only twenty per cent of the normal yield. There was neither barley nor wheat left in Iraq.

The merchants and the markets responded immediately to this inviting situation. The price of barley, never more than \$25 per ton in a normal year and often as low as \$10, now rocketed to \$200 in the official market, where there was none to buy, and to \$500 in the black market. The same thing happened in the wheat market. The normal price has been \$40 to \$60 per ton. In April, the official price in Bagdad was \$450 to \$500, but supplies were available only through the black market at prices ranging around \$700.

This inflation naturally played havoc with the people's bread, the staple food of the great majority of all Iraqis. This was something that affected every family, every peasant, and every worker. At the present rates of pay, many workers, government clerks, and officials do not earn enough after a week's work to keep their families adequately fed—even with bread alone. Discontent, hunger, and starvation are the rule rather than the exception, and there are few areas exempt from this blight of abysmal poverty. In Erbil, in the north, British engineers constructing a new railway have found their laborers almost incapable of lifting their shovels, and the death rate is enormous—even from what would normally be minor illnesses.

The strongest feature of present discontent is that while it is in the first place directed against the government, it expresses itself even more emphatically against the hundred families that actually rule Iraq, and most of all against the British, who are held responsible by virtually the entire nation for Iraq's present plight. Nor does this anti-British sentiment come only from the ignorant, the poor, and the hungry who might have been influenced by Communist propaganda (which is not very strong); it comes from every side: from cabinet min-

isters, from ex-ministers who have the reputation of being pro-British, from all the party leaders, and from almost all higher government officials.

How much of this is genuine and how much merely a reflection of the general anti-British climate cannot easily be measured, but I had the impression that it was more than an ephemeral, opportunist phase of local politics. The deep bitterness against Britain often goes beyond the political margin; more than once I have heard Moslems speak of Western Christians in terms of bitterness and contempt that border on paranoiac race-hatred. (Even in the present Palestinian conflict, few Arabs use such language in speaking of the Jews.) The anti-British mood is therefore not superficial and temporary—as the Foreign Office would like to believe. And it is a mood that tomorrow may become as virulently anti-American. There is no possibility of another treaty with Britain to give the British a special military position in Iraq or provide for an automatic alliance; and while the old treaty remains in force—as it does—the agitation against it and against the British is bound to continue.

BUT there is no sign of Lenin's crucial third requisite for a successful revolution: there is no organized mass party with a revolutionary leadership. The present wave of revolutionary discontent is purely negative: against the British, against the government, against the police, against hunger. And it must be so, because whatever political impetus has been given to the public discontent has come from the extreme Right and the extreme Left, and these can agree only on negative issues. They can shout "Down with the British!"—or Nuri Said—or the Zionists; but they cannot hail Rashid Ali or Stalin or their local leaders without falling into conflict with each other.

Iraq is thus likely for some time to hover indecisively on the brink of the revolutionary precipice; and so long as this continues, the situation in Iraq will remain a major preoccupation of the British, the Americans,

and the Russians: for the strategic stakes are high.

The basic fact is the location of Habbaniya, the Royal Air Force base northwest of Bagdad. It is six hundred miles from Baku, six hundred miles from Suez, and six hundred miles from Haifa; that is, it is within long-range fighter-plane cover in all three directions. It is the only air base in the Middle East which can provide fighter protection and fighter-bomber operation on all Russian lines of approach through Northern Persia and Eastern Turkey. At the same time, it is at a safe distance from Russian air bases, an advantage not enjoyed by some of the new airfields scheduled for construction in Eastern Turkey.

Habbaniya air base is, in fact, the answer to the somewhat panicky views held by the American Secretary of Defense, Mr. Forrestal, who has said that in case of a Russian attack the Middle Eastern oilfields will become wholly indefensible. An adequate air force based on Habbaniya would make any invasion through the narrow passes of Northern Persia a risky and dubious adventure, and one that the Russians would not consider lightly.

This, however, is a purely military calculation and must now be conditioned by the internal stress in Iraq. There is no sign that the Russians are planning a direct descent upon the northern plateau of Iraq; but there is every sign that, as a result of the events inside the country, it may become a base of very dubious value to any Anglo-American coalition; in a crisis, the events of 1941 might be repeated, this time to the benefit of Russia instead of Germany.

IT is within this framework that the Iraq elections have taken place. Although the country appears to be dominated by anti-British sentiment, and no party and no politician would dare say a word in Britain's favor, the great majority of the new parliament (which opened June 21) has been drawn from the pro-British sheikhs. How this comes about is perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of the present situation in

Iraq, and throws an interesting light on the development of British policy.

The new Parliament's 132 seats are distributed among the three major parties and the "Independents." The largest of the parties is the Istiqlal, the Independence party, representing the extreme Right. As mentioned above, its nominal leader is Rashid Ali, who headed the pro-Nazi revolt against the British in 1941 and is now in exile in Saudi Arabia, and its actual leader is Mahdi Kubba, who was closely associated with Rashid Ali's revolt and became Minister of Supply in the government formed after the repudiation of the new treaty with Britain. His right-hand man is Sadig Shenshal, who was Rashid Ali's director of propaganda during the rebellion. But the real driving force behind the party is reputedly Haj Amin, the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem—this at least is the view of expert Arab opinion in Bagdad. The Istiqlal is the best organized of the parties and the only one which enjoys some support from the nomadic tribes. Its newspaper has a daily circulation of about 4500 copies, greater than the circulation of any other Arabic newspaper in Iraq, and its influence goes considerably beyond this.

The second largest party is the National Democratic party, under the leadership of Kamil Chaderche, one of Iraq's ablest politicians and richest landlords. This party has the reputation of being leftist without being Communist; in fact, its program would be considered too conservative by the British Labor party. It has considerable influence, confined almost entirely to Bagdad, Mosul, and Basra. It claims to have ten thousand members. It is as strongly anti-British as Rashid Ali's Independence party, and it is even more feared by the British and Americans because it openly advocates Iraqi neutrality in any East-West conflict; this, the British and American Embassies believe, might paralyze Anglo-American action in case of trouble.

The third major party is the Liberal party. It is composed almost entirely of rather able but not very principled professional poli-

ticians who shift with the wind and are therefore not too friendly to Britain at present. They cannot be considered a popular force.

Two other parties, the People's party and the National Democratic Union, are banned as Communist, though neither would be classed as much more than left socialist in any European country. The real Communists are working clandestinely among students, railwaymen, and port workers.

But the three parties combined have won only seven out of the 132 seats contested (Istaqlal—4; National Democrats—2; Liberals—1). The great majority of the new Parliament—just like every previous Parliament—consists of so-called "Independents."

These are the deputies nominated rather than elected by the thousand sheikhs who own about two-thirds of all cultivable land in Iraq and constitute the strongest single force in the land: they have the money, they have the land, they are close to the Regent and the British. The sheikhs are understandably not inclined towards land reform; they also regard the danger of Communism as a personal rather than political threat. They have become therefore the conservative party par excellence, and since the British have also wanted to avoid any upheaval, they understood from the first the value of cultivating the friendship of the sheikhs.

In this way the pattern of power in Iraq was created. The Regent, the thousand sheikhs, the British—and the Iraqi government which is the creation of these three—lean on each other and help each other along. But on February 27, after the "Battle of the Bridge," new factors of power appeared on the scene to balance and neutralize the old ones.

LARGELY as a result of public demonstrations in support of the Palestine Arabs, many Iraqis learned the value and force of public demonstration. For months they had been encouraged to demonstrate against the Zionists, against the Americans, and against the Russians on the question of

Palestine. It was therefore quite natural, with the continuation of the severe food shortage, that the poor, the politically-minded students, and the calculating agitators of the extreme Left and Right should again have recourse to public demonstrations. But this time they turned against those who had inspired their earlier demonstrations, and the government which came into office after what the Iraqis call the "February Revolution" had to yield completely to the reigning mood; the sheikhs, no fools, also sensed the necessity of discretion; so did the Regent. For the time being the pyramid of power created by the British in conjunction with the sheikhs seemed no longer to have its old solidity.

Thus the pro-British element, though still strong in economic power, is at present in retreat politically. Nuri Said Pasha, the President of the Senate and the embodiment of a pro-British policy in the eyes of the Iraqis, left the country after the February debacle and could not safely return for the election. Saleh Jabr, the Prime Minister who signed the abortive Portsmouth Treaty, also left the country, intending to return in April: he was advised that he would be safer in Cairo than in Bagdad. Dr. Fadhil Jamali, the ex-Foreign Minister, returned to Bagdad, but had to have police protection for some weeks and stayed in voluntary retirement inside his home in the middle of Bagdad's Jewish district.

Yet another factor which has begun to militate against British influence is constituted by the minorities and tribal nationalities of Iraq. For many years these had looked to the British as their natural protectors, but they all claim now to have been bitterly disappointed in their trust and tend to look North for support. There are wild rumors in Bagdad about Russian activities among the Kurds, but closer inquiry reveals no unusual activity by Soviet agents; it is simply that the Kurds and other minorities in the North are, if anything, suffering even more than the Bagdadi from economic mismanagement, and routine Communist propaganda is therefore falling on fertile soil.

THIS internal disorder in Iraq has led to the injection of an important new factor into the situation. The United States government apparently decided during March of this year that Iraq was at least as important as Palestine, if not more so—that it was probably the key to the Middle East.

The Americans had lost faith in the capacity of the Iraqis to do anything for themselves; and they were convinced that the British were so unpopular that they, too, were incapable of doing anything to remedy the situation. As a result, the Middle East experts of the State Department worked out a plan in conjunction with the World Bank to provide Iraq with a Development Board and a Development Fund of 300 million dollars. This money was to be used to mechanize Iraq's agriculture, extend her water supply, and produce five million tons of wheat in Iraq in ten years' time—half the world's present wheat deficit. Certain strings were attached to the loan, not only for the Iraqis but also for the British. The

economic and commercial terms laid down by the United States would mean the general replacement of British influence by American.

The plan was sent to London for Mr. Bevin's consideration. At present writing, more than two months after the transmission of the American plan to London, there has still been no comment from the Foreign Office. (Neutral Middle East experts also question whether the American scheme is really practicable, but that is another matter.)

One thing is clear: the possibilities of Russian infiltration into the Middle East are much greater in Iraq than in Palestine; the country is hanging like a ripe fruit waiting to fall into somebody's lap. The British have lost Iraq: that much is certain. What remains still undecided is whether America or Russia will succeed her as the dominant power; or whether the Middle East states may not yet get together and maintain themselves in comparative independence and neutrality above the battle.

THE ROPE

JACOB SLOAN

*You cannot hold the rope by both ends,
Having both the world and justice.*

—MIDRASH

HE HELD both ends in his careful hands,
Then, looping one around his neck,
Flung the other to the firmament;
And, kicking away the righteous keg,
Hung and swung in neat content,
Strangled between world and justice.

JACOB SLOAN, a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, is on the staff of the American Jewish Committee. He has published a book of poems, *Generation of Journey*, and wrote many of the translations included in *The Language of Faith*, a volume of Jewish prayers. He was born in Brooklyn in 1918.

DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION FOR NEW YORK

Equal Opportunity Through a State University System

EDWARD N. SAVETH

A COMBINATION of diligent effort by alert citizens' groups with some happy accidents of politics has yielded a state university system in New York. On February 16, the Temporary Commission on the Need for a State University, headed by Owen D. Young, submitted its report to the state legislature. Within six weeks, its findings were inscribed on the statute books—along with a law that outlaws racial discrimination in higher education.

As is only too often the case, the enactment of legislation of substantial long-term benefit to the ordinary citizen has been overshadowed by more dramatic political events—the presidential campaign, the grim international situation, etc. Indeed, throughout the struggle for public higher education in New York, those sections of the population that stood most to gain showed the least concern. Yet this successful struggle marks one of the most impressive recent gains toward one of our most fundamental of national aspirations—equality of educational opportunity.

What will New York's state university system look like? The state university law of March 5, 1948 provides for the establishment within the state education department

of a corporation to be known as the State University of New York which shall be responsible for the planning, supervision, and administration of the new institution. Until July 1, 1954 the state university shall be governed by a temporary board of trustees consisting of fifteen members appointed by the governor with the consent of the state senate. The trustees have the responsibility of carrying out the state university program, the main features of which are as follows: In the undergraduate field, four-year colleges will be established in areas that are not now adequately served. The establishment of the four-year colleges is to be accomplished by "the acquisition, absorption, or expansion of existing four-year liberal arts colleges, professional and graduate schools, research centers, universities or other facilities, or by the creation of new facilities or by the extension of financial assistance or grants to assist institutions. . . ." Two-year community or junior colleges, financed half by the state and half by the community, are to be set up for vocational and technical training as well as general education; it is expected that these will place particular emphasis on extension work for part-time students and adults. Two state medical centers will be founded, by taking over and expanding existing institutions and/or by creating new ones. The state will also provide financial support for teacher training in the four colleges in New York City.

Thus, the first steps have been taken toward a New York State university system that can challenge, in scope and completeness, that of any other state in the nation. But it is hardly the part of wisdom to relax effort. A state university system can be sustained, against the inevitable hostility of various vested educational interests, only if the pub-

EDWARD N. SAVETH, who was active in the campaign that led to passage of the law for a New York state university, here appraises the significance of this achievement for democratic education. Dr. Saveth was born in New York in 1915, and studied at the College of the City of New York and Columbia University. He has contributed to the *Nation*, the *New York Times Book Review*, and to previous issues of COMMENTARY; he is the author of a book, *American Historians and European Immigrants, 1875-1925*, just published by Columbia University Press. At present, he is on the staff of the American Jewish Committee.

lic is solicitously aware of the precarious circumstances of its birth, and of the problems that this new-born system must face.

WHATEVER original inhibitions the Temporary Commission on the Need for a State University may have had—and it had plenty—New York's vast unmet needs in the field of higher education could no longer be overlooked. Even before the invasion of education-hungry veterans, the antiquated structure of higher education emitted a disturbing medley of creaks and groans. In 1939, New York spent \$5.07 per capita for the education of the age group 18-22. Only Georgia's record (\$3.83) among the forty-eight states was worse. If the base were extended to age 24, New York would rank last among the states.

True, New York possesses the largest number of private colleges. The majority of these are denominational in origin, and some still retain their church-related character. These institutions derive their support from student fees, endowments, gifts, and grants. Many have venerable traditions—extending in the case of Columbia University to the pre-Revolutionary era—and their educational and social prestige is bolstered by the wealth of their trustees. Along with denominationalism, wealth, tradition, and snobbery have frequently come undemocratic discriminatory practices. A survey conducted by the *American Mercury* alleges that private colleges in New York State and elsewhere seek "to hold down Jewish enrollments"; also accused of discrimination were the medical schools of Columbia, Cornell, University of Rochester, Long Island University, and Syracuse. This allegation seems to have been substantiated by the determined stand of the New York State Association of Colleges against legislation to outlaw discrimination in education.

Higher education in New York State's private colleges is costlier than in other states: in the school year 1947-48 the student needed \$1,306 for tuition, board, supplies, etc.—a sum quite beyond the average family budget. In the pre-war years, some thirty to fifty thousand students left New York State

annually, many in search of low-cost education in other states. Even so, fully 47 per cent of those graduating in the top quarter of their high-school classes could not afford to go to college—a shocking waste of potential cultural resources. A report dealing with the cost of education in New York State prepared for the Board of Regents in 1937 concluded: "Predominantly, general collegiate education is accessible to the economically privileged rather than to the intellectually gifted regardless of wealth or poverty in the State of New York."

At this moment, New York's private colleges are less prepared than ever in their history to cope with the need for higher education. Already bursting at the seams with an expanded student body, they look with trepidation toward the future: by 1964, full-time college registration is expected to reach 276,000—and the present capacity is not quite two-thirds that amount.

If this gap is to be bridged, it is essential that the private colleges embark upon an extensive program of expansion. However, by their own testimony, they are helpless to do so. Typical is the plight of Colgate University, described by its president as confronting a "serious financial problem" resulting from increased costs and a simultaneous drop in interest rates on endowments. Barnard College, Dean Gildersleeve estimated in her annual report, faces a deficit of over \$100,000 for 1947-48. The colleges have increased tuition fees as much as they dare—in the case of Columbia to twenty dollars a point—but continue to operate at a deficit. Nor will increased enrollment help matters. Since tuition fees cover only part of the cost of education, the private colleges do not stand to profit significantly by admitting additional students. That is why, on numerous college campuses, there is feverish fund-raising activity.

IN THE struggle for gifts and endowment funds, not all the private colleges are going to survive; the smaller ones, especially, face a growing danger. It is not surprising, therefore, that voices should be heard appeal-

ing for federal assistance to the private colleges (though the colleges themselves are nervously apprehensive at the possibility of becoming dependent on government funds). However, the recent report of President Truman's Committee on Higher Education recommended a comprehensive public-aid program for *publicly* supported colleges and universities, expressly excluding *private* colleges. Adopting the principle that federal funds should be appropriated only for institutions under public control, the majority of the committee held that acceptance of public funds must carry with it acceptance of the right of the electorate to exercise review and control of the policies and procedures of these institutions.

Two representatives of the private colleges on the President's Committee—the Very Reverend Frederick G. Hochwalt, Director of Higher Education at the National Welfare Council, and Dr. Martin R. P. McGuire, dean of the Graduate School of the Catholic University of America—have chosen to regard abundant and low-cost (when not free) education in public colleges as a direct menace to the existence of the private colleges. This interpretation, it is true, is not entirely without foundation: the public colleges might offer embarrassing competition to their private counterparts. But since the problem of the private colleges is obviously one of endowments rather than enrollment, the public college is only a secondary complication to a patient already suffering from acute economic illness.

In the debates preceding adoption of the state university law, Chancellor William J. Wallin of the New York State Board of Regents loudly echoed the fears of the private colleges. The Regents, it should be said, have invariably taken the interests of the private colleges to heart. As early as 1857, a committee of the state legislature criticized them for misinterpreting their original function—which was to establish a public university; and in 1910 Commissioner of Education Draper accused the Regents of being derelict for not having fulfilled their statutory obligation—established in the 18th century—of

maintaining public control over Columbia University. More recently, the Regents have afforded New York's colleges every latitude in their operations and have done nothing to reduce the cost of higher education or to prepare the colleges for the present crisis.

Mr. Wallin's apprehensions were shared by the Catholic colleges and the private colleges in the Association of Colleges and Universities of the State of New York. These groups were sufficiently influential to have the state university bill amended in the closing days of the legislative session. The trustees of the state university were directed, in the drawing up of plans and recommendations, to provide full opportunity "for existing public and private institutions to be heard." They were also admonished to "recognize and foster the historical development of higher education in the state, which has been accomplished through the establishment and encouragement of private institutions." A third amendment revealed, however, that the interests of the private colleges and the denominational colleges were not entirely identical. The denominational schools, under the provisions of the state constitution, are expressly denied financial assistance from the state. This third amendment, included in the law through the influence of the denominational colleges, denies such assistance to the private colleges as well.

None of these amendments impairs the authority of the trustees to implement the recommendations of the Young commission. They are, in effect, resolutions that do not commit the trustees to any action that they might not have taken of their own accord in the normal procedure of establishing a state university system. Yet the fact that they were introduced and enacted in the frantic closing days of a harried legislative session is indicative of the strength of the private colleges in New York State.

TRADITIONALLY, it must be remembered, it has been the private rather than the publicly-supported college which has been the capstone of higher education in New York State. Whenever the problem of pro-

viding more higher education arose in the past, solutions were evolved within the existing framework of private education.

The earliest of these solutions took the form—by now familiar—of liberal financial assistance. In the first half of the 19th century, about a dozen private colleges received from the legislature grants of money, land, or authority to operate lotteries which produced considerable income. Additional financial aid was forthcoming as a result of the federal Morrill legislation of 1862, offering grants of land to the states for the establishment of colleges of agricultural and mechanical arts. This law laid the foundations of many of our state universities, especially in the West. But in New York, the land grant was turned over to the newly-founded Cornell University, with the proviso that the university establish one hundred and fifty scholarships. Although the value of these scholarships was considerably larger than the original grant, valued at \$600,000, Cornell, by shrewd management, was able within two decades to increase it until it provided an endowment of \$6,000,000.

The system of state scholarships, introduced in 1913, also served to benefit the private colleges by subsidizing increased enrollment. Five scholarships, carrying a stipend of one hundred dollars a year for four years, were awarded in each assembly district to those who stood highest in Regents examinations. Governor Sulzer, in his message approving this law, made it clear that "when all scholarships are finally filled, the expense to the state will be practically the equivalent of the maintenance of a state university." Beginning in 1944, the State embarked upon a much-extended scholarship program for veterans of either World War.

Only in fields where the private colleges have been reluctant to fill an educational need, has the legislature set up state-supported schools and colleges. There are today eleven state teachers colleges which residents of New York State may attend without paying tuition. There is a state Maritime Academy and six state-supported institutes of

agriculture and technology. There is also a system of "contract colleges": schools of agriculture, home economics, veterinary medicine, labor and industrial relations at Cornell, the School of Ceramics at Alfred, the School of Forestry at Syracuse—all maintained at state expense.

This mere filling in of gaps in privately-supported higher education has resulted in a crazy-quilt pattern, lacking in logic and integration. The annual report of the State Education Department for 1937 emphasized the system's inconsistencies. The state acknowledges "its responsibility for the collegiate and professional training of farmers, housewives, veterinarians, foresters, teachers and ceramic artists, ceramic technologists and ceramic engineers. It acknowledges no responsibility for the training of architects, professional nurses, optometrists, chiropodists and others in allied callings. . . . Granted that it is a sound function of the state to train teachers and agriculturists, why is it proper and necessary to train veterinarians and not doctors, dentists, optometrists and chiropodists?"

Outright grants to colleges, state scholarships, the establishment of "contract" institutions—these are the makeshifts that have been relied upon to dodge the issue of a state-university system in New York. Even at present, when the need for a fundamental change in the pattern of higher education in New York State is obvious, there have been powerful voices stubbornly insisting on additional patchwork. Chancellor William J. Wallin of the Board of Regents—whose opposition to a state university system has already been noted—proposed the creation of twelve thousand scholarships at three hundred and fifty dollars a year. Wallin also urged that the state build a series of institutes of applied arts which would offer two-year vocational—not academic—training.

This attitude reaffirmed, by implication and quite possibly by design, the aristocratic conception of a liberal arts education which has been consistently challenged in the United States by the rise of the state universities. It should be remembered that a good

many of our state universities began, under the terms of the Morrill grant, as institutes of agricultural and mechanical arts; later on in their development, liberal arts and professional schools were added to serve the needs of the community on various levels. The desire of the Regents to separate liberal arts education from vocational education while maintaining the liberal arts program as the privilege of a selected minority, runs directly counter to this national trend.

The preliminary recommendations of the Temporary Commission in the fall of 1947—never officially made public—went a considerable distance toward appeasing the Regents. The commission's reported intention was to stop short of recommending a state university and to propose instead a series of junior or community colleges offering two-year courses, in which the main—though not exclusive—emphasis would be on vocational training; the academic student in these colleges would be able to qualify for a state scholarship that would permit him to complete the last two years of study in one of the private colleges. The news of this plan was extremely discouraging to the friends of a bona-fide state university. For while it is true that the commission's plans went further than the Board of Regents relished, it would have meant a truncated system of state-supported higher education which the private colleges, by virtue of their control over the admission of third-year students, would inevitably dominate.

THIS WAS the outlook of the commission around October and November, 1947. By late December and early January, certain events caused this outlook to be revised.

There was, first of all, the report of President Truman's Committee on Higher Education, the first volume of which was released on December 15. Its far-reaching program made the recommendations of the Young Commission look insignificant. If Governor Dewey were to cross swords with President Truman in the 1948 political arena, he could not afford to leave himself vulnerable on the matter of education.

The supporters of a state university system also had the assistance of a stroke of luck. By chance, the research findings of the staff of the commission—which bore very favorably on the idea of a state university and which the commission had been at some pains to keep private—came into the hands of Benjamin Fine, education editor of the *New York Times*. Fine promptly published them, making it difficult for the commission to disregard the known findings of its own staff.

In addition, the various minority groups in the metropolitan areas belatedly awoke to the merits of the state university. Initially, there had been fears that a state university might be transformed into a "ghetto" institution, accommodating almost exclusively those candidates for college entrance who had been rejected by the private colleges on "racial" or religious grounds. The state university project was further distrusted as an easy "out" for politicians on the touchy issue of anti-discrimination legislation in higher education. It was only after many weary hours over the conference table that the realization dawned that here was no mere subterfuge, but an institution desirable for the substantial relief it offered and for the promise it held for democratic education.

Also, the commission's announcement that it was friendly toward a state law against discrimination in addition to a state university helped lay the specter of a "ghetto-university." The Quinn-Olliffe Act, as finally enacted by the legislature in accordance with the recommendation of the Young Commission, makes it an unfair educational practice for a post-secondary school, which is not denominational, "to exclude or limit or otherwise discriminate against any person or persons seeking admission as students . . . because of race, religion, creed, color, or national origin." The act authorizes the Commissioner of Education to halt unfair practices, either on his own initiative or in consequence of a petition filed by an aggrieved individual. If the Commissioner's informal efforts at adjustment between the aggrieved individual and the university fail,

the Commissioner will refer the matter to the Board of Regents, "which shall issue" a complaint setting forth the unfair educational practices charged, the complaint to be followed by a public hearing before the Regents. After hearing the facts, the Regents will either dismiss the complaint or direct the school to cease and desist from the unfair practices found. Such orders will be enforceable in conventional court proceedings.

The press helped to confuse the public mind by spotlighting the discrimination aspect of the state's educational problem. On January 23, 1946 a bill was introduced into the legislature by the Democrats for the establishment of a state university. Unfortunately, this came hard upon the heels of a "Report on Discrimination in Institutions of Higher Learning" prepared by the Mayor's Committee on Unity in New York City. The *New York Times* headlined its account of the bill as follows: "State University Costing \$50,000,000 Asked to Fight Bias," and *PM* and the *Post* followed suit.

The stress on this theme was unfortunate; it was hardly sound strategy to seek the crucial support of upstate rural New Yorkers, overwhelmingly Protestant, by underscoring the needs of downstate urban Catholics, Negroes and Jews, when the educational needs of their own young people were even more importantly involved.

IN PUBLIC testimony before the Temporary Commission on October 20, former Governor Herbert H. Lehman for the American Jewish Committee, Judge Meier Steinbrink for the Anti-Defamation League, and Rabbi Stephen Wise for the American Jewish Congress, set forth extremely cogent arguments for the need for a state university. There were also representatives from the Urban League, the Jewish War Veterans, and so on. But the commissioners heard little that indicated the interest of the rural Protestant element which forms the backbone of the upstate communities. Moreover, the Polish-Americans and Italian-Americans, who are important minority groups in several upstate cities, went unrepresented.

Ironically, to the end, the poor and middle-income farmer, the factory worker and mechanic in Buffalo and Syracuse—who have the most to gain both for themselves and their children by the establishment of a state university—showed themselves most apathetic on the issue. Metropolitan New York, with a system of free municipal colleges, does relatively better by its lower-income groups than is the case upstate where such facilities are non-existent. Yet, with the exception of the Mayor of Utica and a representative of the Empire State Teachers' Association, upstate was silent.

WHEN all is said and done, the movement for a state university system has succeeded even beyond the expectations of the groups that supported it. A myriad of details remain to be worked out—it is still impossible to say, for example, how many students the system will accommodate—but the main battle has been won: New York has at last opened the way towards a full development of the democratic principle in higher education.

Without minimizing efforts of a small band of enthusiasts for broader educational opportunity, undoubtedly the general political situation tipped the balance.

As Republican nominee for the Presidency, Governor Dewey's candidacy will be aided not a little by the forty-seven electoral votes of New York State. His backers have not forgotten that he did not carry the state against Roosevelt in 1944. This year, against the weaker candidacy of President Truman and abetted by Henry Wallace's independent campaign, he has an excellent chance—provided that he gets sufficient support downstate, stronghold of the minority groups.

Perhaps this victory has come with too much freakish facility to realize its almost revolutionary significance for education in general, and not merely for New York State. In a commencement address delivered at the University of Indiana in 1910, Frederick Jackson Turner indicated how the state university has made for greater democracy in

America. Breaking down the aristocratic conceptions of a higher education, the state university, said Turner, opened careers to the talents of all classes of society. He likened the state university to a deep shaft penetrating the socio-economic hierarchy and tapping ability from all segments of the population. This was the channel by which farm boys become Supreme Court justices, by which poor city lads climbed the ladder to economic success, by which the children of immigrants realized an important aspect of the promise of America.

From the state universities, Turner pointed out, came significant innovations in the college curriculum which awarded fuller recognition to scientific and applied studies. There the union of vocational and academic work in the same institution found encouragement, as well as the development of agricultural and engineering colleges and business courses, the training of lawyers, administrators, public men, journalists—all under the ideal of service to democracy.

TURNER painted a glowing picture of the state university as a democratic institution. However, it is also true that certain of our state universities are political strongholds; that they can be pressured for good or evil by powerful community interests. It was the municipally operated College of the City of New York which banned the mathematician Bertrand Russell from its campus because of his unorthodox views on the institution of marriage. Again in 1940, the municipal colleges of New York City were the objects of a most vicious red hunt.

The state universities of Texas, Louisiana, and Georgia have all been made pawns of the political struggle within these states. On the other hand, one should be mindful of the enviable reputations of private institutions such as Columbia and Harvard, with respect to academic freedom and unfettered scholarship. Not only will it take a good deal of vigilance to keep the New York state university system from becoming a political football, but the administrators of the constituent colleges will need to incorporate into their policies the venerable tradition of academic freedom and human dignity that the private colleges have developed.

Two World Wars and the atom bomb have made the problems of leadership and training more crucial than ever before. Our social problems are certainly no less pressing than when Turner spoke. Actually, the training of the American people to its maximum potential is so vast a project as to require cooperation of public and private educational institutions. In carrying out their share of this undertaking, the private colleges of New York are more certain of their ground, safer in their traditions than New York's new state university, which has yet to be shaped by the people who brought this institution into being. It remains to be seen how zealously the people of New York will guard their new educational system against the inroads of politicians, economy-minded legislators, and those who would throttle academic freedom. Only an alert, enlightened public opinion can guarantee the fulfillment of its promise for democratic higher education.

ISAAC RAHABI MAKES GOOD

A Story

HARRY E. WEDECK

IT HAD been hard to find the synagogue. For all his sixteen years, Isaac Rahabi felt tired. Humbly he slid into a corner pew near the emblazoned door.

There was plenty of room that early cool morning, in the Mogen-David Synagogue, before the sizzling heat poured down on Calcutta; but Isaac Rahabi, being a Bene-Israel Jew, still retained that timid humility which accompanies poverty.

He gave a slight sigh. He had trudged through squalid alleys where crumpled Moslem beggars wailed for baksheesh. Past Hindu coolies loaded toweringly with stacks of mangoes. Past Chinese peddling hot savory dishes from copper pots that dangled from their shoulder-supports. Past, timidly, the swaying unveiled Eurasian girls and the pomaded Japanese women who clicked by in wooden geta.

Then the synagogue had come full upon him, massive, ornamental, bespeaking lakhs of rupees and unbounded opulence.

Isaac Rahabi turned his glance slowly over the scrolls that stood heavy with gold and silver ornaments.

"Like a mosque," he muttered, "not like our Bene-Israel synagogue in Bombay."

HARRY E. WEDECK was born in England in 1897 and studied in schools in England, Scotland, and on the Continent before coming to America. At present he is chairman of the classics department at Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn, and pursues his special interest in Oriental languages. Dr. Wedeck is the author of *Humor in Varro and Other Essays*, *Latin Poetry*, and several textbooks on the classics. His latest book, *Mortal Hunger*, a novel about Lafcadio Hearn, was published last year. He has also contributed to many periodicals here and abroad. A previous short story, "The Examination," was published in the July 1946 COMMENTARY.

He looked up toward the bima where the cantor was intoning Hebrew litanies. The cantor was a white-bearded figure, in long flowing robes, his turban hidden under his talith, impressive with a hieratic dignity that caught Isaac's breath.

A pang bit into Isaac Rahabi, the bitter sense of the dejected condition that had driven him here. He trembled at the galloping flight of time. Sixteen, and what had he accomplished? Occasional, menial jobs that had kept him hungrily alive. A handful of annas wound into an old handkerchief. He looked down at his worn khaki tunic, at his heelless, exhausted slippers.

IT HAD been an excitement touched with hope, when a year ago he had left Bombay after the monsoon season. His mother, crooning over his limp little brother who lay panting on the charpoy, had given a nod, not of consent, but of resignation. "Go, Isaac. Go, son. Perhaps it will be better. You may find work. Then you will be able to study in peace. Ai!" She dropped heavy eyes on the sick boy.

The cantor intoned with fervor before the sparse congregants. A pudgy, dark-skinned jeweler from Chowringee kept glancing restlessly and openly at his heavy gold watch. There were some elders, with thin gray beards and mournful eyes. A woman or two, with tinkling anklets and drooping earrings. There were others, clean-shaven and natty, pink-cheeked, evidently Western Jews.

Isaac Rahabi felt the thrumming insistence pounding into his straying thoughts "... what can I do? I must find some work. Here are my own people, all Jews, in this House of God. They will help me. I must wait until the services are over. Then I shall ask. . . ."

The cantor swayed and drew out the guttural Hebrew like an Arab. The services ended. A buzz of talk broke out; snatches of Hebrew, English, some Urdu. There was a quick restlessness as the members scurried toward the exit. A small well-fed man whose gold watchchain embraced his girth shot a quizzical glance at the dark-skinned lean boy who sat tense in the corner pew.

The fat little man dug into a pocket and thrust some coins at Isaac, "Here's some baksheesh, boy. Good morning."

Isaac Rahabi flushed as he let the annas drop tinkling on the floor. "I am not a beggar, sahib. I am a Bene-Israel Jew. I am looking for work. I thought, in a synagogue. . . ."

The fat man raised an eyebrow. "Any kind of position," Isaac Rahabi went on. "Have you anything for me?" His voice quavered with urgency. "I wanted to study," the words poured out. "Medicine. But that is expensive. I have been at the Kadoorie School. I can write Urdu and English, please, sahibji."

"You know Calcutta?"

"Not well. I have just come from Bombay."

"Oh. I don't know. Come and see me tomorrow at nine. Chowringee. Number 602. Ask a Sikh policeman." He slipped away.

THAT night Isaac Rahabi slept on the Maidan, among mehtars and coolies and non-descript Eurasians.

The morning had a buoyancy that gave him too some resilience. The light sparkled and a brittle luminescence hung over the city. The heat would come later, dank, enervating.

Isaac plunged into the spacious boulevard of Chowringee that slits the city. He was hungry, but he was afraid to use up his remaining annas.

The Burra Bazaar broke into his vision, clamorous with appeals of peddlers and porters, customers and dealers, snarling oaths and a sharp "juldi karao!" as an ox-drawn creaking wagon ambled too slowly.

Isaac knew the Bombay bazaars, but the Burra Bazaar was more tantalizing, more

pungent, pervaded by smells of soft ripe fruit, sandalwood, hot gusts of air. He merged with the din, gladly losing his shabby identity.

He recognized them all, the Parsees in cow-hoof caps, the kitmatgars disdainfully ordering huge supplies of vegetables and fruit, the occasional customer haggling out a small victory. The glistening piles of green mangoes and tamarinds, the luscious figs and sleek dates, the mountains of nuts, jackfruit, and pears from Kashmir, fragrant cigars from Sumatra. He touched a bunch of grapes. "Jao!" snarled the Hindu squatting behind his produce.

Isaac extended an anna, received change and a bunch of dark purple fruit. As he munched, he sensed the cumulus of sounds, grunts, chatter, coaxings that echoed over the bazaar.

Isaac wound among the booths, past the jewelers who sat hammering out filigree work with the barest of tools. A scrap of Arabic broke into the air. A black-bearded hillman from Swat was bargaining in guttural Pushtu. A bhisti swished by with his bulging, gleaming wet goatskin.

Isaac wanted to linger, to take in, with eyes and senses, the entire sweep of the kaleidoscopic scene, the liveness and the ever-changing variousness of it. But he recalled, gloomily, the mission that drove him on.

He came out again on Chowringee, dodging among the heavy stream of Hindu students, drill-suited Britishers who cut a straight path along the sidewalks, bespectacled babus, vakils on their way to the law courts, a kilted soldier on pass from Fort William, gently strolling Parsees, the easy ladies. From the temple of Kali further along came a booming tom-tom recitative.

The fat tubby man had a luxurious suite of offices. Isaac sat down gingerly in the anteroom, silent, shrunken. It was a long wait, that alternated hope and depression.

A spare young man hurried out from an inner office. "You're the boy from the synagogue?"

"Yes, Mr. . . ."

"Mr. Ambekar is sorry, but there is nothing just now. He asked you to take this." The young man held out a small envelope.

Isaac took it, hopelessly. He walked slowly out. As he opened the front door, two dark, perfumed girls swayed in, laughing. Isaac remembered his Hebrew that he had learned in the bare Bene-Israel school, and cast down his eyes.

He sent home four rupees to his mother, with a feigned picture of hopeful enterprises in the offing.

Luckily, the nights were warm. The Maidan was not unbearable, except that he shrank from the furtive contacts of coolies with bloodshot eyes and shaky hands who muttered to him in hissing Urdu.

Empty weeks trailed by. The rupee and the annas dwindled to pice and only in the shadowy alleyways in the Chinese quarter near the docks that catered to the sea-scurvings of the port could he buy meagrely for his needs.

Isaac rummaged among the advertisements in the *Times of India*. But he threw away the pages in greater despair. What was open for him, with all his reading knowledge of Urdu and English, when so many Failed B.A.'s couldn't find employment?

He would return somehow the long, foot-sore way once more, and find a bitter haven with his mother and sickly brother.

When night fell, sudden, complete, scented with spiciness and a warm tang from the Hoogli, he walked listlessly toward Chowringhee again. In his mind ran the Hebrew prayers for nightfall and he unthinkingly conned the words:

Shir ha-maalot. . . . Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord in the night seasons. . . .

The lights were friendly, at least; and the crowds, bent on furtive assignations and erotic encounters, gave him a sense of sympathetic, human participation in his fellow

men. He would make his last attempt, his final challenge to Calcutta.

Pondering, he reached a glaring building, streaming with bands of light. At one side of the flamboyant entrance door stood a placard: Employment Office, Side Entrance.

Isaac hurried over.

WHEN Isaac's mother had read the letter twice, she laid it down on the charpoy beside the sick boy. "So you will be well again, Ruben. Are you not glad?"

The boy's feverish eyes blinked. "I am, mother. When is Isaac coming home?"

"Perhaps we shall all go to Calcutta and live there, in a house with fountains and bearers, and a punkawallah to fan us." Her eyes were far. She picked up the letter once more. "Listen again, Ruben, my boy: 'I wear a fine white uniform, mother, with gold on it. And shoes, even in the daytime. . . . Soon I will be able to send you more. In a year or two perhaps 50 rupees. Then I will come home and begin to study again. It will be easier. Tell Ruben to get better quickly. Buy him some good things, mother. He likes chutney. Here is another rupee. . . .'"

At five o'clock Isaac Rahabi had to be on duty. He entered a side door, changed clothes, and came out of the front entrance, silent, dignified. His white uniform lay leanly on his thin frame; the gold added a touch of distinction. He coughed. He was ready. He stepped forth. "This way, sahib, to the box seats. The picture is just beginning."

Slowly he preceded the tubby little man who was leaning heavily on his perfumed companion.

Isaac Rahabi, the Bene-Israel Jew, sighed, this time placidly, and murmured the evening prayer:

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. . . .

From a nearby mosque, as if in response, came a tremulous wail:

Allah akbar wu Mahommed rasul!

SALZBURG: SEMINAR IN THE RUINS

A Report on the European State of Mind

ALFRED KAZIN

FOR six weeks I lived with some hundred and thirty Europeans and Americans in a "castle" just out of Salzburg, Austria—Schloss Leopoldskron—which had been built for an Archbishop in the 18th century and acquired by Max Reinhardt in the 20th. I was teaching at the school for American studies organized by the Harvard Student Council, an experiment at free communication in ideas between Americans and Europeans, and one that was successful beyond all my expectations.

In these paranoically nationalist days free communication between individuals from different countries is so rare that one heard charges that we had been planted in Salzburg (the center of the American occupation zone in Austria) as a State Department job. Actually the idea originated with an Austrian-born student at Harvard, Clemens Heller, and several of his friends at the

AT THE School for American Studies in Salzburg, Austria, organized by the Harvard student council, American teachers and European students were able to meet and compare their respective philosophies and experiences for the first time since the end of the war. ALFRED KAZIN, who was a lecturer on the staff of the school, here reports on the state of mind of those who will constitute the European intelligentsia, particularly in Germany and Austria—a state of mind whose significance can scarcely be underestimated. Mr. Kazin is the author of *On Native Grounds*, a study of American prose literature since 1890 that established him as one of the country's leading critics. He also edited *The Portable William Blake*. He has taught literature at the College of the City of New York, Queens College, the New School for Social Research, and Black Mountain College, and was for a time on the staff of the *New Republic*. His new book, *The Walker in the City*, will be published shortly. Mr. Kazin was born in Brooklyn in 1915.

university, who had been shipping food to European students. They thought it would be useful to bring a group of American scholars and writers directly to those European teachers and advanced students who knew English, were interested in American society and culture, and had been sealed off from us during the war. The faculty included, among others, F. O. Matthiessen, with whom I lectured on American literature, James Johnson Sweeney, Margaret Mead, Benjamin Wright, Wassily Leontieff, Lyman Bryson, and—shades of the State Department!—Gaetano Salvemini, who in his electrically pure and inimitable way led discussions on international politics.

There were people from almost every part of Western and Central Europe: England, France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Hungary, Greece, Czechoslovakia—plus three Australians. There were students who no longer had a country—a young Latvian DP studying at Innsbruck; a young White Russian who had been brought up in Yugoslavia after the first World War and was now neither Russian nor Yugoslavian; a Hungarian DP who had worked for the American army in Salzburg; a Rumanian Jewish girl whose mother had been shot by the Nazis before her eyes and who had spent more than a year in Auschwitz. The three Czechs all knew Russian. One of them was a young Communist and former partisan who argued exuberantly with everyone, roared out old Russian revolutionary hymns with all the ardor of Chapayev, and was one of the most engaging members of our group. I liked him very much, but sometimes found him a little unreal—partly because he had a way of fitting every question into social categories that made one feel that the dis-

cussion was not with him but with history, and even more because he had a directness and easy young charm that made him seem more a throwback to John Reed than a contemporary of our own dour little totalitarians. Poland was asked to send students, but after a long period of deliberation decided not to send any—among other reasons, an official in its Ministry of Education explained, because Matthiessen had not selected any of Upton Sinclair's novels for discussion, which betrayed our prejudice against socialist literature. (We lectured on Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Whitman, Melville, Henry James, Mark Twain, Henry Adams, Dreiser, Hemingway, Dos Passos, Eliot, and E. E. Cummings.)

WE WERE quite a group—Austrians who had been officers in the Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe, DP's, a young French count of twenty, an Australian girl whose husband was a fellow at Oxford, a Greek musicologist, an Italian physician, a professor of American literature in Budapest, a professor of English literature in Rome, a Danish economist whose last experience of the occupation had been getting slapped by an SS man. Among the Americans one assistant was a Georgian, a graduate student in economics at Princeton who was perhaps the sole member of our group who believed in what is called free enterprise, preached it actively, and spent part of the summer writing a book on the need to revive a new system of capitalism in Europe. Another of the American assistants, a navigator in the air force during the war, had parachuted down somewhere near Salzburg and had been a prisoner for weeks in the worm-eaten barracks just down the road that was now a refugee camp for Polish Jews. One of our students was a wonderful Italian boy of twenty or so whose undogmatic Socialist humanism made me realize how many creative outlets had been opened to his generation in Europe during the resistance. His father had been an anti-Fascist from the beginning; he had been born in France. He came to Italy for the first time during the

war, with a French-Italian partisan group that operated in the north. Another of our students was a young Austrian anti-Fascist who was the son of a well-known liberal editor in Vienna. He, too, had gone into Italy during the war to join the partisans, and had come back to fight the Nazis in his own country. Another was a young Czech student who had spent the war years working fourteen hours a day at forced labor in an armaments factory, plus two hours of travel each way.

There were two Spanish Republican boys who came to us from France. They were children when the civil war ended in 1939, and had been refugees with their families ever since. One of them was a painfully delicate and sweet-faced boy who seemed to bear the whole tragedy of Spain in his face. He told me his story one Sunday afternoon as we walked back from town after listening to Otto Klemperer conduct Mahler at the Festspielhaus. We were walking in the sticky white dust of Leopoldskronstrasse, making our way between American jeeps and cars. There were Austrians having a Sunday walk—the men in *Lederhosen* and Tyrolean jackets and velvety hats, with that unbelievable yodeler's whiskbroom carrying them along like a sail; the women in dirndls. They looked so stiff and wooden-faced in their gay costumes that the contrast made them look even more morose than usual. There were Balts who had come to Germany and Austria during the war as forced or willing labor for the Nazis, and were now afraid to go back to their homes in Soviet territory. There were people from the camp just at the turn of Leopoldskronstrasse, rumored to be a camp for "minor political offenders."

My ears were chiming with Mahler's Chinese bells and I had been thinking of Klemperer, whom I had seen last in the Hollywood Bowl—a ravaged giant and "American" conductor now trembling balefully over the Vienna Philharmonic as he stood on the podium. Now I was listening to stories of Spanish exile in Mexico, America, and France, and looking at the unrelated

migrants walking in Leopoldskronstrasse. In Italy a month before I had been hearing Carlo Levi's story of American Negro deserters and Nazi deserters hiding out together in the north Italian woods. I had seen the old Jews in Rome getting into the trucks of the Joint Distribution Committee. The world suddenly seemed nothing but one great DP camp. Who belonged here—the Austrians, the homeless Jews waiting for a "contact," the bored-looking American liberators roaring past in their jeeps and shiny new Cadillacs?

I KNEW before I went to Salzburg that the seminar might be a strange experience; I hadn't counted on its becoming such a tableau of post-war Europe. And this against a background of American studies which, far from putting our national veil over the immediate human issue of Europe, thrust us more deeply into it. I think we established confidence from the outset by discussing America not as a country but a particular sector of modern society—and always so much in relation to Europe that looking back upon our work I thought Matthiessen had supplied the theme in his opening address by quoting Delmore Schwartz's words: "Europe is still the greatest thing in North America." I know that our frankness surprised and stimulated many of our students. Yet there was always something deeper than "frankness," which may strike only the self-conscious and political note. It was a kind of self-recognition in ideas that was refracted from the natural differences between us and from our sense of responsibility to our European students.

In this scene, in 1947, one could hardly talk about American literature to Europeans without seeing it all over again as part of one's education. Living abroad inevitably fixes certain key issues about America in one's mind, especially when one is living in sight of an American army of occupation and in the neighborhood of a Jewish refugee camp. It is harder then to blunt the main points about yourself, as one does within the subtle isolations of the American scene. If

you do not commit yourself fully to the truth of your own experience, you lie. And if your standard of reference is not constantly man as he is today in all his national masquerades, you lie in that academic game of "disinterestedness" which can be as dangerous as open nationalism. There were former Nazis in our group—some of whom may have been Nazis still, though I doubt it; there were democrats and socialists who were as far from political exaggeration and fanaticism as they were from forgetting the imperatives of politics today; there were people from every country who showed in the way they addressed themselves to a particular text how deeply they respected the human faith embodied in literature. With all that was left unsaid between themselves and us, we were all making an effort to get away from national labels and fears and to define the nature of a common experience. Certain American books helped—how much I never would have believed until I saw how naturally Thoreau and Melville and Cummings opened key issues for us. In listening to Matthiessen talk on Eliot, I had an unforgettable experience of the kind of cultural solidarity that can arise in a group when the lecturer unites it by his conviction and creative emotion.

YET there was something wrong, and wrong not in the nature and expectancies of our project, but in the setting. I do not mean that it was wrong to be in Salzburg—for any effort at intellectual cooperation in Europe, it is better to begin in the ruins. I mean that Salzburg was wrong in itself. For all its style, its traditions of culture, its Festival, it had a peculiar sterility in it, like a railroad waiting room in which people have left nothing behind of themselves but their impatience and their distance from each other. I have seen many cities in England and Italy that were bombed. I have never seen any city so inwardly dead as Salzburg, which was hardly touched at all.

Cities have personalities that can be felt quicker and more soundly than the personalities of people, and which consist in

the collective humanity of the people who live in them. Salzburg gave off the smell of a dead culture, of something "picturesque" and "cute" kept up without belief. It was a city of migrants, of foreign soldiers, of hunger, and of people craftily keeping up their antiques. With nothing left but the "past," its tradition seemed not merely old, but insincere. These people did not know how to go from war to peace; and they were certainly not getting any help from the young American soldiers who looked as if they had lost their way home.

The Austrians now lived in a kind of parody of their traditional fantasies—nothing in their status was now clear. They were occupied in space, but officially not in spirit. They were not independent, for the country is divided into four zones of occupation; they were not quite like Germany, for there is a national government in Vienna, half Catholic and half Socialist. The Catholics and Socialists are drawing increasingly together in their opposition to the Communists, who have a very small following but a certain importance, since Vienna is deep in the Russian zone, though the city itself is controlled jointly by the four powers.

I was in Vienna one week-end, having procured that famous gray card in three languages which permits the visitor to enter into its armed camp. The city looked like an empty palace patrolled by soldiers on guard against each other. On the Ring there are two great luxury hotels within a few steps of each other—the Excelsior, occupied by American officers, and the Grand, occupied by Soviet officers. Before the Grand a Russian sentry stood guard with a fixed bayonet. If there had been an American sentry before the Bristol the two guards would have made an exact cartoon of the present international situation.

THE Austrians did not know whether they had been defeated or liberated. In great part this confusion was not their fault, for in the international struggle between Russia and America the exact status of Austria had been bypassed and the country turned into

another Korea. But the confusion was also deep in Austria's recent history. As a matter of fact, the Austrians had not been sure for some years what they were. They had been an empire, an unnaturally delicate and friendless republic, a clerical Fascist state under the thumb of Mussolini, and then another province of the Third Reich. Now they were a political grotesque like Germany, or in other words a political battlefield. Yet they had something like a national personality again, and this allowed them to make claims that the Germans could not. Not quite free and not quite occupied in theory, half in the Allied dock and half out, half Socialist and half Catholic, the Austrians were perhaps even more split within themselves.

Listening to some of them explain events after 1938, I was often reminded of a schizoid who feels that he is vaguely guilty of something, does not know what to fix on, and in rage against his own solitude and confusion lights on the fantasy that he is the most innocent and misunderstood of men. I have never been interested in the question of "German" or "Austrian" guilt, for I do not think that the rise of Hitlerism and the tragedy of the war are explainable in such terms. Yet listening one afternoon to the Austrian Foreign Minister, Karl Gruber, insist that the Austrians had been taken by Hitler in 1938 against their will, I realized that one could hardly expect any other strategy from the Austrians than to insist that they had been another Czechoslovakia. The problem of Austria's relation to Germany was not one people were going to discuss frankly either in its pre-Hitler chapter or in the present. Obviously the Austrians suffered not only from the occupation, but from their inability to frame past and present into any kind of lucid national picture. The Socialist Vienna that went down under Dollfuss's guns in 1934 was one thing; the Nazis who had deliriously welcomed Hitler into the city were another. It was easy enough now to see why respectable Catholic nationalists should wish to build up Austria before the world. But it was not only the

outside world they were trying to convince; it was themselves.

MOST of the Austrian students at our seminar had been prisoners of war in America or England. Some were too young to have been influenced very deeply by the Austria before Hitler, and could be taken as examples of a generation formed by Fascism and now left without any particular faith to replace it. Grimly absorbed in reconstructing their personal careers, they gave me the impression of people trying much too hard to please and of trying earnestly to form good relations with people they did not understand. They lacked the *esprit* which was so characteristic of European students who had fought in the resistance—a quality which I learned to associate with active political curiosity. Some of these Austrian students were examples of the cultural lag forced upon them by Fascism and their life in the army. In one case this was almost funny — a Viennese obviously born to be a psychiatrist, who relentlessly psychologized everything he read without aesthetic intelligence, but had not come on Freud's works until he found them in a prisoner-of-war library in Texas. Now he was a psychoanalyst-in-training in Vienna and reading the founding fathers of psychoanalysis in their common city and common language. Most of the others, formed for seven years or even more under Nazism, were either too obsequious to talk about politics, or, as was more often the case, simply too disoriented, too eager to get onto a career, to talk about themselves. They were generally very literary, and sometimes gave me the impression of having exchanged all their old ideas for certain poems which carried the unobjectionable qualities of spirituality. Yet having been cut off so long from other countries, they sometimes attempted political talk as if *that* would help them over the breach. One of them, an ex-pilot in the Luftwaffe, came to me one afternoon and asked me solicitously, as the very greatest favor, to discuss with him certain issues of the Spanish Civil War. It turned

out, with my sympathies, that I had none of the facts right. He had never heard of the destruction of Guernica by the Nazi air force or the bombardment of Almería by the Nazi fleet, and after listening to me, gravely and doubtfully, went away shaking his head. Another young Austrian, a poet and translator, explained to me one day how Dollfuss and the Heimwehr had been attacked in 1934 by the Socialists. Yet what interested me most in these talks was not the lack or falsity of their information, but their uninterest in politics. It was as if they had decided on it merely as an opening gambit of conversation, something they had heard people should do.

THE most striking member of the Austrian group was A., a Viennese historian of thirty-three, who had been captured by the Americans in Tunisia, had spent the last two years of the war in prison camps all over America, and had wound up as a fireman to a Negro service company in Kentucky. A. interested me very much, and not only because he was our prime example of a reconstructed Nazi and a liberal come home to the arms of Western culture. Unlike most of the other Austrians, A. had grown up in the "old" Austria and was able to discuss his relation to Nazism with amazing frankness and objectivity. His role had significantly been born of a personal choice. His life had fallen equally into two worlds—one scholarly, with minute and wistful researches into the history of Austrian liberalism; the other as a soldier and officer in the Wehrmacht. He had served in the armies that overran France in 1940 and had been wounded; had then been at the Vatican Library on some German Catholic research project; he had volunteered to fight in Russia and in North Africa. A. was prosaic enough in many ways. He had the kind of industrious formal cultivation that is professional with Austro-German doctors of philosophy, and which can mean so little as an index to their general perceptiveness. After his experience in America he had begun furiously to read up on our history, and

I could see him already putting away Turner and Beard and Parrington as he had once put away Treitschke and Mommsen. Yet he had a way of seeing himself in the focus of contemporary Europe which kept him from the cultural provincialism of the other Austrians. Sitting on the terrace at Leopoldskron, he made his own schizophrenia between Austrian and German culture seem as stark as the mountains that rise up just on the other side, and separate Austria from Germany. He made me see the ironic facets of his life—the Italian grandmother, the Syrian relatives, his love for Latin civilization—as the pathetic and comic predicaments of an Austrian intellectual and ex-German officer who despised the racial psychosis but had an unconscious respect for it: in his mind it was wedded to those who ruled. I do not know if he was more honest than the others, but he was historically more self-conscious. Yet his knowledge was really of very little use to him. Instead of freeing him, it encumbered him with the debris of history. His real life was entirely in ideas, and his ideas were sterile—he moved between history as a world of action and history as *Geist*, or pure spirit.

TO A. history was no longer an immediate world in which *he* lived. There were other Austrians who could now say, with Henry Ford, that history is bunk. I got a vivid realization of this at the Salzburg Festspielhaus when I saw the opera Gottfried von Einem had made of Georg Buchner's drama on the French Revolution, *Danton's Tod*. I have never read the play, but remembered it from Orson Welles' production of the 30's—wildly irrelevant to the text as that must have been in places—as a highly charged study in the tragedy of a revolution that was dying in the hands of its leadership. Buchner's play was a study in the nature of power; it made a contrast between the revolution as an historic process and the coldly personal conflicts of leaders who had lost touch with the masses. It showed Danton and Robespierre not only as gigantic personal forces helplessly magnetized against

each other, but also as the separate fragments of a social idea split on itself. Einem's opera revealed that the revolution held no interest for him. The opera was as empty as a Hollywood film on the French Revolution—but with a curious difference, for where Hollywood conceives history as a costume ball, Einem dismissed it as irrelevant. He had taken the revolution only as a spectacle.

Buchner's play showed the revolution embodied in its leadership, the struggle of real men in the light of real forces; Einem showed the leadership as superior to revolution. History, it turned out, was only the personal quarrel of great men. And though these men were Danton and Robespierre, they had nothing real to quarrel over. A mob howled mournfully from time to time, the guillotine went down first on this actor, then on that; a widow grieved. Why, I wondered, had Einem taken a subject so uninteresting to him? What had he seen in the Buchner play that made him lavish so much insignificant music on it? The answer, it seemed to me, was in the fascination with leadership—the leader as artist, as a tragic personality doomed to fail in the struggle with other leaders. History, construed as the effort and collective struggle of many masses, had no meaning to him. The fall of Danton was like the death of Hitler in his underground bunker: the suicide of a romantic artist who had failed to complete his masterpiece. History was only great men, and died to the music of their fall.

MEANWHILE there was the revival of the "old" Salzburg, as personified in the Jewish conductors and musicians welcomed back to the Festival. I had never known Salzburg before, but suspected that the revival was as purely formal as the plaque bearing Reinhardt's name that now marked the Platz before the Festspielhaus. Living in his castle I used to think a good deal about Reinhardt, and learned something about his past when I saw how little he had left of himself here. It was still the Archbishop's castle. And though the place might have been conceived by Reinhardt for one

of his grandiloquent productions, he had fled it to save his life, while the Archbishop in all his portraits and the portraits of his kin hung upon the walls like a florid signature to a deed. Of course times had changed: there were Lithuanian children playing in the grass on the other side of the lake, and an American M.P. walked through Leopoldskron from time to time as he made his rounds.

There was barbed wire around the vegetable patches. Another time, other manners: this was the seedy aftermath of war, and went with the bartering of cigarettes for food, the ridiculousness of the national currency, the black market bourgeoisie at the Festival, and the old men who stooped at the door of the Festspielhaus to pick up a butt that some American had indifferently flung away. But the Castle was unimpeachably Baroque and Catholic Austria, and reminded one in every passageway of the Archbishop who had possessed not only this showy pile, but Salzburg itself in the old days when it had been a miniature Papal state, a theocratic duchy. The Jew had fled; the Archbishop remained.

To tell the truth, they had been both rather vulgar men—one with his quasi-religious pageant plays, redoing everything in terms of "theater"; the other with a kind of easy pomp that was reflected in the halls and staircases of Leopoldskron and in the complacent allegories that decorated the dining room. But the failings of the Archbishop had been taken up into the grand gestures of a ruling class, worldly and florid as the baroque style itself. He had been himself even in his pretentiousness; the castle was the true portrait of an institution and an age.

The Jewish theater director had bought it, but spiritually he had only rented it. He must have been like Fitzgerald's Gatsby, envying the outward pomp of the "insiders" into whose world he had never quite entered, and from which he had been expelled with the same careless brutality that cost Gatsby his life. Why should he have needed this pile at all?

WHAT lay behind the conformities of the Austrian Jews? I did not know enough about them to say, but one side of the past was revealed in the showy emptiness of the Hugo Hofmannsthal-Reinhardt *Jedermann* (Everyman), the religious overture to the Salzburg Festival.

Forbidden under the Nazis, *Everyman* had now been restored by Reinhardt's widow, Helene Thimig, *exactly*, I was told, as he had directed it in the old days. It was played on the steps of the Cathedral, in the magnificent quadrangle setting of the Domplatz. The story of *Everyman* is, of course, the primitive Christian allegory of the life and death of the rich man who comes to realize that he possesses everything but his own soul. He has been indifferent to his kindred and to human suffering, and lives only for riches and for his mistresses' pleasures. One night, as he sits joyfully at dinner with his and their friends, he sees Death appear before him—at first, to him alone, so that none of the others can understand his disturbance. *Everyman* is soon deserted by his friends. He tries to escape Death, but hears his name being called through the city. At the end he is abandoned by everyone except Faith, who comes to him and tenderly shows him the light. He enters the Cathedral to be absolved, and then with shining face walks serenely into the grave.

Nothing could have been better "theater" in the external sense—the audience facing the Cathedral, the quadrangle, the use of choruses, the crying of *Everyman's* name from the roof-tops, and the timing which brought the play to its end just as evening fell, so that the last scenes were blurred into the darkness of death itself. Nothing could have been technically more shrewd than the adaptation of the allegory to its available church setting. And yet it was as boring as only an excess of means to ideas in the theater can be. For the real note it struck was not the struggle of *Everyman* against death, but awe before the established power of the Church. The cathedral blocked out *Everyman*, and made him seem not the universal human kind, but a

confused and paltry little fellow who never had a chance against so much stone and sculpture and age. It was obvious that Reinhardt had seen the possibilities of a terrific "production" in the setting of Salzburg, but had not known that of all the dramas in the world this one, if taken in its elemental purity, was the least susceptible to it.

Salzburg is not Assisi; it is a chapter in the history of the Counter-Reformation. The simplest frame church in New Hampshire or Georgia would be a more fitting setting to the story of *Everyman*. Its real subject is not an institution, but the coming of hope; it is a story so unforgettably rooted in the deepest elements of man's fate that nothing in it can be exaggerated without diminishing its secret and universal truth. And if faith appears, it is certainly not against a company of four shoddy angels who stand frozen before the cathedral doors looking like the incompetent alumnae of a "left" dance group.

One night, at a little cabaret in Salzburg, I saw another version of *Everyman*. I thought it would be a parody of the Reinhardt production, for the other numbers were easy night-club routine—songs, dances, vaudeville jokes full of mild little lampoons of the occupying powers. Instead it was a correction, and a surprisingly moving one. This version was acted out on the little night-club stage. *Everyman* was not a medieval man; he was a contemporary, in evening clothes, and turned out to be an over-fed, irascible, and perplexed bourgeois. His girl was not the high priestess of Baal, but just the kind of easygoing trollop *Everyman* would need after a hard day at the office. Yet his affairs turn out all wrong; the complexities of living become too much for him. *Everyman* wonders if it would not be a good idea to go with Death. He wants to die, and pursues Death, begging to be taken. Yet Death refuses him—his time has not yet come, he must learn how to live first. How else would death have any meaning?

As you walked into town of an afternoon, past the Jewish refugee camp and the camp for minor political offenders, through

the tunnel and out past the great rock wall that bears on one side a Latin inscription to Archbishop Sigismund, you saw the sign of an ice-cream factory for American troops. Across the street was an ice-cream parlor that specialized in curb service. The smart Austrian Inn was occupied by American officers and civilian personnel; the old Mirabelle club, next to the gardens, was a Red Cross club. Indeed Salzburg was so full of American signs and cars that it sometimes looked like a Middlewestern town on Saturday afternoon. There had been so much careless driving in the streets that a safety program had been set up. In places where accidents had occurred there were markers—in English—which showed an arrow and the grim warning: DEATH STRUCK HERE. DRIVE CAREFULLY.

It was my first experience of a city occupied by troops from my own country, and it was curious to realize that I had less contact with them than with the population itself, which was little enough. If an army in wartime is a non-human mechanism, an army in peacetime looks like an assortment of unrelated individuals. The faces of young American soldiers in Salzburg showed a boredom that amounted to stupefaction. I would watch them sitting over rows of Coca-Colas in the Red Cross club, a great empty ballroom overhung with dusty paper ribbons and full of tarnished gilt panelling. On the walls hung crude drawings of Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven, and Richard Strauss. Every afternoon a young Austrian knocked out boogie-woogie on the grand piano, but I never thought the soldiers present believed in it. They had the air of tourists sitting in a Parisian dive. Some afternoons they played bingo. The White Russian and ex-Yugoslav at our seminar, who was a chess champion, would sometimes come out to the club to give the boys lessons. The Austrian doorman at the entrance wore a spangled cap and an odd costume of discarded GI work pants and a moldy frock coat that made him look as complacently grotesque as Groucho Marx. Yet there was always an anxious impending look of self-satisfaction about him, as if he could never decide whether he belonged

with the Haves or the Have-Nots. Inside the hall pretty little blondes took orders for hamburgers and sundaes. They all talked clean, immaculately functional English, and smiled constantly.

The sadness in the Red Cross club was the familiar sadness of soldiers away from home.* But in that setting it had a grisly emptiness, like the black paper sets in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, that reflected the miserable and mechanical collision of human beings with rooms that parodied each other. In the moroseness of the Austrians out on the street one felt bitterness and hunger. In these well-fed young soldiers there was an animal oppressiveness; they were living only in their bodies. They glowered with a boredom that sent out waves of its own decay.

ON THE way back to the castle I would sometimes stop in at Camp Riedenburg, the Jewish refugee camp. There was an official entrance to it, guarded by a young refugee who wore a brassard marked with a Star of David. But none on Leopoldskronstrasse, and whenever I went in to see one couple I got to know a little—the Hershkowitzes, who lived in the eighth block—I would have to climb over the fence, a business which always struck me as perfectly symbolic.

Riedenburg was another world. There were about fourteen hundred adults in it, plus five hundred children, half of whom were orphans. Riedenburg had been a prison camp under the Nazis, and had obviously then been used by some British force, for one of the buildings had an old sign noting it as General Smuts Hall, and another was named after King George VI. Most of the houses were old shacks, and some lay so close to the street, next to the privies in the yard, that going down Leopoldskronstrasse at night I could see people moving about in

rooms that looked like minute cellars just above the ground.

Mr. Hershkowitz was the camp policeman—a very amiable youngish man in his early thirties who lived in one of the better shacks of Riedenburg with his wife—who had been his brother's widow—and the brother's child. Whenever any of us would come in to see him he would grin happily and rush out to bring us some of the Salzburg Army beer. He would show us letters from his relatives in Providence, Rhode Island, and talk about the war. Sometimes he told us his story, and sometimes his wife would tell us hers. It was like a reading of the Passover Haggadah: where one left off, the other took it up. The stories were different from each other, and they were always the same story of the Polish Jews between 1939 and 1945—the coming of the Germans, the astounding kindness of this officer or that, the savagery of the local population, the burning of the houses, the flight into the woods, the life of the women in the ghetto, the camps, and then the liberation by the Americans. Mr. Hershkowitz always told his story with a curious self-deprecatory little smile, as if he had told it too often without ever being able to convey its horror. But his wife lived hers all over again every time she talked to me; as she stood up there in that little room she would sometimes clutch her daughter as if she had talked herself back into the anguish of the war years.

I OFTEN wondered, thinking of our eagerness to hear their stories and their readiness to tell them, if we could not meet on some other ground as well, not merely as "victim" and "outsider," but as human beings with something more than misfortune to unite them. Some day there may be something more; but in that camp it was impossible. The Hershkowitzes were like people who have been ill so long that they have forgotten what it is to be well. They would never learn it again in Riedenburg. Everything in it had a coldly necessary charity, like the use of serum in an epidemic. Everything they used had been given to them in

* But the American experience in Europe obviously means different things to different people. An American movie company was making a film last summer in Frankfurt to be called *Berlin Express*. A company representative told a reporter for *Stars and Stripes* that they were lucky to have a setting — bombed-out Frankfurt — "which would have cost Hollywood a million dollars to construct."

a purely quantitative spirit—for so many refugees, so much food, living space, light, and blankets. Victims living among victims, everything they saw and heard reminded them of what they had gone through. They occupied the camp like people waiting for a train they are not sure will ever arrive. Their status was accidental and purely provisional, and the American soldiers in the next street who looked after them, the Austrians walking by just outside the fence, were equally strangers. They were not hopeless, far from it; they were living in a state of intolerable self-contradiction.

One afternoon Hershkowitz took some of us around the camp. There was a cobbler working just inside the yard; in another corner a little old man was selling pears that he had bought in town that afternoon. In the crowd outside the Administration building a white-haired old man was arguing about food allotments with an American sergeant, and saying in a velvety British accent: "But why do we never get white bread any more? We used to get white bread!" The soldier explained that white was now very expensive bread, but the old man did not seem to think this was a very good reason.

In one "family building" a man was sitting at a window reading a newspaper, and looking strangely like someone who had just returned from work on a torrid summer evening. We looked at the tailor shop, the shoe repair shop, and a shed in which men were dismantling a broken army truck they had picked up somewhere. In the combination

school and orphanage there were maps of Palestine and pictures of Herzl and Chaim Bialik; little girls were walking about, tended by a young nurse.

And then we went into a long basement room. It was a miniature concentration camp. There were twenty-four people living in that room, including the sick. The beds themselves were wooden slats just above the floor; there were pails, some with uneaten food, some with garbage, next to the wall, and little burners on which the women did their cooking. The tables were covered with Yiddish newspapers from New York. In the group at the door there was a woman, perhaps about forty, who wore a black dress and little gold earrings—a woman whose face was so finely sculptured in defiance, and had so much pride in it, that she made the room seem even more squalid by her personal vividness. Unlike Mr. Hershkowitz, who wanted to go to America, she would hold out for Palestine. I talked with her about Riedenburg and about America; but what was said seemed trivial. That room had dying people in it, and this was a woman who looked as if she held life in her hands and didn't know what to do with it. I wanted to give her something, and didn't even know what to say. I had never seen such a contrast between dejection and courage as there was between that woman and the others, lying on their beds or shuffling about the room. I put my arm on her shoulder to say good-bye, and with an indescribable smile she looked up at me and said: "Eh? How do you like the way we live?"

THE MONTH IN HISTORY

THE UNEASY TRUCE

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

ON FRIDAY, JUNE 11—four weeks after the proclamation of the State of Israel—peace of a sort descended on Palestine for the first time since the General Assembly's adoption of the partition resolution on November 29. No one knew precisely how many Jews and Arabs had died or fallen wounded in the fighting of the intervening months. Both sides had sought to minimize their own casualties and exaggerate those of their opponents. But it seemed likely that there were some ten thousand dead and at least as many more wounded, not to mention a quarter of a million displaced from the towns and villages where they had lived and other thousands whose homes had been destroyed.

Though Count Folke Bernadotte had succeeded in bringing about a truce where others had failed, his chance of converting it into a lasting peace did not seem bright. Certainly both sides had reason enough to wish for a halt in the fighting: as long as it continued, the land of Palestine would be livable for neither. Yet the more blood was shed, the more reluctant each side appeared

to be to cease its shedding without exacting a price adequate to recompense it for the losses already suffered. There were some cynical observers who maintained that there could be no peace in Palestine until the Jews and Arabs had engaged in mutual slaughter long enough to convince both of the impossibility of final victory. If this were so, then the outlook seemed gloomy, for the haggling of both sides about the terms of truce, and their insistence on the unaltered letter of their original demands, showed that both were far from that point.

There was, however, another aspect to the picture. For neither Jews nor Arabs could altogether afford to disregard the outside world—however ready both might at times appear to do so. The Arabs were, perhaps, in a somewhat stronger position in this respect than their opponents. In the long run, their own numbers and the solid support of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples of Africa and Asia formed arguments which the great powers could not ignore. On the other hand, there were few places in the world where it was possible for Jews long to maintain the illusion that they were, by themselves, capable of playing a decisive role. But in the short run, the Arabs were no readier than the State of Israel to risk a situation in which they would be cut off from outside help while their opponents received international aid.

Hence, when the Security Council, its fifth unimplemented cease-fire appeal having met with no more success than the previous four, threatened sanctions against whichever side failed to heed its sixth, both yielded. In part, the final achievement of a truce was also due to other factors. For one thing, the Council hedged its appeal

IN TIMES when month-by-month events give little comfort to the hopes of men in general, and perhaps of Jews in particular, it is the task of the writer of this department to winnow out the facts from the welter of belief, propaganda, actuality, and emotion that constitutes present-day public information and opinion. MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM has had many years of experience as a news analyst. The judgments expressed here are his own, and in no sense represent or reflect official policy. Mr. Goldbloom was associate editor of the magazine *Common Sense*. He was born in New York City in 1911 and is a graduate of Columbia University.

around with conditions which met some of the Arab objections to previous truce proposals. For another, instead of permitting itself to be drawn into a discussion of the reservations and counter-reservations offered by the Arab states and Israel, the Council blandly disregarded them and treated the acceptances as unconditional. Nor did it attempt to elucidate the ambiguities in its own resolution—a task which would certainly have involved considerable debate and might possibly have revealed that they hid real disagreements. Rather, it left this to Count Bernadotte, who was both able and willing to make necessary decisions.

The major problems to be solved before the cease-fire could be made effective concerned Jewish immigration and the provisioning of Jerusalem. The Council resolution prohibited the entrance into Palestine of fighting personnel, and provided that men of military age who did enter were to receive no military training during the period of the cease-fire. The Arabs maintained that, since almost all Jews of military age awaiting entrance to Palestine had received military or para-military training, they constituted fighting personnel and were debarred from entering. (It was noteworthy that they raised no objection to continued Jewish immigration *per se*.) The Zionists, on the other hand, asserted that the original British resolution, which barred all potential soldiers, had been amended specifically to forbid the immigration only of actual ones. Here, Count Bernadotte got both sides to accept a compromise that permitted the continued entrance of immigrants of all ages, subject to his supervision to insure that the composition of the groups entering remained normal, and was not altered to include a preponderance of young men. At the same time, it was agreed that any potential military personnel were to be interned in camps under Bernadotte's supervision, and receive no military training.

Jerusalem

The problem of Jerusalem was somewhat more complex. Here, the Arab blockade had been effective for almost two months, and the city was reduced to only a few days' food supply. The best efforts of the Zionists to open the main road between

Tel Aviv and Jerusalem had been repulsed, and there seemed little likelihood that they would meet with any greater success in the near future. But a supplementary route had been carved out through the hills, shortly before the cease-fire went into effect. This route was scarcely more than a cart-track, and it was under Arab fire for part of the way. But it had served to permit the introduction into Jerusalem of some military supplies. On the other hand, it had been of practically no use for the provisioning of the civilian population. Only when the supply of powdered milk for children gave out had the facilities of this route been diverted to replenishing it.

The terms of the truce provided that supplies sufficient for the needs of the civilian population were to be permitted into Jerusalem, but that all Jewish convoys were to be checked by Count Bernadotte's staff to make sure that they contained no military equipment and that the amount of food brought in was to be sufficient only to maintain the city's supplies, not to increase them. But the Zionists claimed that, since they had opened the route through the hills before the cease-fire, there should be no check on convoys sent through it, and that these convoys should be additional to those permitted via the main road under the agreement. This claim did not interfere with the conclusion of the truce, since it was not advanced during the negotiations. But it almost resulted in a resumption of the fighting, when the Arabs threatened to fire on unchecked convoys entering Jerusalem by the secondary route. An ultimatum from the truce commission finally secured Zionist agreement that all convoys should be checked.

Despite these difficulties, and some minor violations by both sides, the truce went into effect on schedule. What was even more surprising, it continued in force more than a week later. Both sides, to be sure, appeared restive, and many complaints were filed with Count Bernadotte's representatives. But the combination of a reasonably adequate supervisory staff, able to check quickly on all violations, and Count Bernadotte's rapid resolution of all disputed points, kept Jews and Arabs alike from responding in kind to real or fancied infringements of the truce provisions.

The Effects of the Truce

The obvious beneficiary of a truce at this time was Israel. Its forces remained, for the time being at least, in possession of Jaffa, Acre, and a substantial amount of additional territory allotted to the Arabs under the partition agreement. (While Dr. Weizmann asserted that these territories did not belong to Israel and would be surrendered by it, other leaders of the Jewish state were by no means so ready to surrender them. And the Irgun and the Sternists, maintaining their separate armed forces outside the borders of Israel, made no secret of their intention to continue fighting until all of Palestine and Transjordan were conquered.) At the same time, the siege of Jerusalem was temporarily lifted. And here, the Jewish position had become daily more precarious. The fall of the Jewish quarter of the Old City, and Arab recovery of the Sheik Jarrah section of the New, had made it clear that the Jewish forces in Jerusalem had already lost the initiative which they had seized when the British withdrawal began. Meanwhile, continued Arab control of the main road between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem meant that—despite the trickle of supplies over the secondary route—the reserves of the Jews in all Jerusalem were approaching exhaustion.

Similarly, the ban on arms imports into either Palestine or the Arab states worked in favor of Israel, whose arsenals were able to produce more weapons domestically than the Arabs could. And Israel, too, was in a better position than the Arabs to spend the truce period stockpiling weapons in European ports for immediate shipment to Palestine when this became permissible. Again, the continued immigration of young men of military age—most of whom already had some military training—strengthened the army of Israel even if they were not immediately inducted into it.

Nevertheless, the truce was not unanimously welcomed in Israel. The Jewish Communist party of Palestine opposed it—which was not surprising, since the Soviet Union had not voted for the truce resolution, and had no part in its enforcement. The Irgun asserted that the truce constituted a betrayal worse than Munich, and implied that it would disregard it. A week and a half later, it carried this threat into execution

by attempting to land a cargo of arms, first near Natanya and then near Tel Aviv. But the Ben Gurion government, which had declared that it would treat truce violators as national enemies, called out Haganah to block the landing. A pitched battle lasted until the ship burst into flames under bombardment by Haganah mortars.

Declaring that the attempted breaking of the truce constituted a threat not merely to the state but to the capacity of the Jewish people to defend themselves, the government ordered the arrest of a number of Irgun leaders. Irgun, for its part, withdrew its forces from the army of Israel and declared that it was again going underground. And in protest against the government's efforts to carry out the truce terms, two representatives of the Mizrachi resigned from the Cabinet. It appeared that a test of strength between the democratic and totalitarian forces in Israel was under way, despite Menahem Beigin's order to his followers to refrain under all circumstances from again taking up arms against the government as long as the war against "the Anglo-Arab enemy" continued.

Yet even those leaders who were responsible for the acceptance of the truce seemed to have agreed to it more because they were unwilling to defy the United Nations than because they felt any enthusiasm for its provisions. Certainly they did not regard its indefinite extension as desirable. For they felt that, once the United States had finished with its elections, its leaders might be less ready to back up the Zionists.

As for the Arabs, they were even more reluctant to accept the truce proposal, and did so mainly because the British made it clear to them that rejection would mean the cessation of British arms shipments.

The greatest beneficiaries of the truce, however, were the United States and Britain. For it rescued them at least temporarily from a situation in which they had seemed more or less committed to backing opposite sides in one of the crucial areas of the world. Now, it was possible for Britain—as long as the truce lasted—to refrain from arming the Arab states without running the risk of their defeat at the hands of an Israel which regarded Britain as its worst enemy. (Even worse, from a British point of view, would be an Arab victory won after Britain had broken her

treaty obligations to the Arab states. For this would strengthen all the already powerful anti-British groups in the Arab world—where Britain was still in any case widely hated as the patron of Zionism.)

The United States, for its part, was freed from the pressure to lift the arms embargo, and to become a military as well as a political partisan of Israel. It was relieved, too, of the necessity of continually waving a big stick in the UN in order to line up the necessary votes for its resolutions. (And even a very big stick had not always sufficed to get the votes in line—a fact which scarcely added to the international prestige of American diplomacy.) This was particularly welcome in view of the fact that any implementation of implied American threats to withhold aid from nations—such as Britain and China—which were reluctant to swing into line, would undermine the whole basis of American foreign policy in every other area. Even the often-suggested step of bringing pressure on the Arab states by refusing to purchase oil from them seemed certain to hurt the United States far more than it hurt the Arabs—who, after all, had not taken the initiative in bringing foreign oil interests in.

The Chance of Peace

Above all, however, both Britain and the United States welcomed the truce because it offered at least some hope of reestablishing peace in the Middle East. (This consideration did not produce a corresponding enthusiasm on the part of the Russians.) It was their hope that on its expiration the truce might be extended, and that this process might be repeated until the two parties, weary alike of war and of negotiations, found some common ground.

At the moment, the prospect of such an agreement did not seem good. Officially, Zionist leaders still insisted that an absolutely independent state, with the boundaries laid out in the Assembly resolution, was the least they would consider. And however inclined they might be, privately, to compromise, it was doubtful whether they would dare compromise in the face of the Irgun's certain opposition. (Yet it was possible that Irgun's precipitation of open civil war might alter this.) As for the Arabs, they continued

to demand dissolution of the State of Israel before any direct negotiations.

Hence, when Count Bernadotte established his headquarters on the Greek island of Rhodes and invited Zionist and Arab representatives there for negotiations, it was understood that they would talk only to him, not to each other. Certainly it would have required a high degree of optimism to predict that two parties who could not even agree to sit down in the same room would be able to agree on a formula for Palestine within three weeks.

Yet the forces compelling both sides to seek an accommodation were great. The Arabs, however certain they might feel of victory in terms of years, were faced with the prospect of increasing Zionist military power in the immediate future, with the consequent likelihood of serious military setbacks in the coming months. And they were forced to recognize that, however important the colonial masses who supported them might be at some time in the distant future, the decisive powers in the world today were the United States and the Soviet Union. So long as these championed the Zionists, war remained risky for the Arabs.

The Zionists, for their part, could not look with equanimity on a situation in which their whole energy had to be devoted to war. Even if they were consistently victorious in a military sense, their victories would be politically self-defeating. None of the goals which Zionists had sought in Palestine could be realized in a state at war—and this was almost equally true even if the war was not a shooting one. Palestine could no longer serve as a center of Jewish culture, for it would have no time for culture. It could not absorb the displaced Jews of the world, for it would not be able to establish a viable economy. And certainly it could not offer a safe haven to such Jews as might be forced to flee from one or another corner of the Diaspora. For it would not itself be safe.

Jews had reason, too, to worry about the Palestinian war's repercussions elsewhere. So far, the Arab countries had on the whole succeeded in preventing major anti-Jewish riots, and the restrictions they had imposed on their Jewish inhabitants so far consisted mainly of prohibitions of the possession of arms and of membership in or communica-

tion with Zionist groups. But there were a number of ominous developments.

In the Lebanon, anti-Jewish riots were suppressed only when the troops fired on and killed some of the rioters. And though that country's delegate to the UN, Charles Malik, praised the Jews in the Arab countries and noted their contribution to Arab civilization, there was no guarantee that continued war would not lead to the drowning of reasonable voices such as his in a sea of ultra-nationalist violence. Again, in the French Moroccan towns of Oudjda and Djerida, the stabbing of an Arab by a Jew in an argument over Palestine precipitated riots in which over forty Jews lost their lives. (Here, there were certainly other factors besides the Palestinian situation which created the basis for tension. One was indicated in a *New York Times* report that all the Arabs involved were miners, while the Jews were merchants—which suggested a sociological basis for trouble.) And throughout the Arab world, the Jews were feeling the necessity of ostentatiously demonstrating their loyalty to the Arab cause and their antipathy to Zionism by public declarations and by contributions to the Arab League.

But though both sides might need peace, this was no guarantee that they would achieve it in the near future. For men had always needed peace, but they had seldom found it. On the other hand, there was every reason to believe that when the truce expired it would be renewed. Hence it seemed probable that for some time to come Palestine would remain in a state which was neither peace nor war, but might change far more readily to the latter.

Another War

UNLIKE the struggle for control of a partitioned Palestine, the conflict over a partitioned Germany had not quite reached the shooting stage. But it was no less real. And if the Western Allies were somewhat less tightly hemmed in by the partial and intermittent Soviet blockade of Berlin—which was entirely surrounded by Russian-held territory—than were the Jews of Jerusalem, they were none the less besieged.

Almost from the day when the Western Allies entered Berlin—as part of a deal by which the Americans turned over Saxony

and Thuringia to the Russians—the Soviet authorities had wished them out. For the fact that they had to share control of Berlin with the Western powers prevented them from carrying out the forced merger of Social Democrats and Communists which they had initiated in their own zone. And it made possible the stunning ideological defeat which they suffered in the municipal elections of October 1946, when almost half the voters cast their ballots for the Social Democrats, and four-fifths of them gave their support to anti-Communist groups, despite Russian threats and bribes.

The Russians never accepted this defeat as final, and bided their time until they could force the Western powers to evacuate Berlin. For a time, they confined themselves to hints and threats. As long as they were still receiving substantial reparations from the Western zones, and hoped for German unity on terms which would permit Soviet exploitation of the entire country, they did not care to precipitate matters.

But the chance of such a settlement rapidly receded. The Western powers became ever more restive at the prospect of pouring money in to meet the deficits of their zones, while the Russians extracted reparations from theirs. At first they sought to obtain Russian fulfillment of the Potsdam Agreement's provisions for the treatment of Germany as an economic unit, and for the banning of reparations out of current production until necessary imports had been paid for. When it became clear that this was not what the Russians had in mind, the British and Americans began to wonder whether it was a good idea to keep their side of a bargain—from which they in any case stood to lose—if the Soviet Union disregarded its side. Finally, they decided that some steps for the revival of the economy of Western Germany were necessary, even without the consent of the Soviet Union.

The first stage of this process was the economic merger of the British and American zones. This merger can hardly be said to have been precipitate. It was first announced at Stuttgart by Secretary of State Byrnes on September 6, 1946—after the Russians had been running their zone without regard for the terms of the Potsdam Agreement for over a year. In his Stuttgart speech, Secretary Byrnes invited the Russians and French

to join in the proposed merger; needless to say, they did not. Nominally, Bizonia was created on January 1, 1947. For some time, however, it involved little more than a merger of the deficits of the two zones. The German bizonal machinery was not set up for almost six months more, and even then it had little power. And it was not until August that the British and Americans announced a new level of industry for their zones, to replace that agreed on by the four powers under the Potsdam Agreement. Even then, however, they had not given up hope of coming to terms with the Russians; hence their actual implementation of the new decisions was almost negligible.

But with the breakdown of the London Conference of Foreign Ministers in December, it became clear that there was going to be no agreement on a united Germany. Meanwhile, the Marshall Plan had been initiated, and this furnished another powerful argument against further postponement of decisive action. For the one place in Europe where large unused industrial capacity made possible an early large-scale increase in production was Western Germany. Hence the British and Americans now set out to put Bizonia—hitherto regarded as merely a temporary expedient—on a permanent basis, and to integrate it with the European Recovery Plan. And, in particular, they sought to persuade the French—who at London had finally abandoned their attempt to play the Russians against the British and the Americans, and cast their lot with the latter—to join in setting up a West German State.

On June 7, this effort bore fruit in a communiqué announcing that the United States, Britain, France, and the Benelux countries had reached agreement on the establishment of a new government for the Western zones of Germany, and for the institution of an international control for the Ruhr. And two weeks later, after the French Chamber of Deputies had finally ratified the agreement, the first important step in the economic reorganization of Western Germany was taken with the introduction of a new currency.

The Russians, of course, greeted the new setup with howls of rage. They had already declared that the establishment of Bizonia was a violation of the Potsdam Agreement, and asserted that the Western powers had

forfeited any right to stay in Berlin. In March and April, they had gone so far as to precipitate a series of crises by blocking rail and road transit between Berlin and the West. At that time, the British and Americans made it plain that they had no intention of leaving, and were prepared to fly supplies into Berlin if necessary.

The Soviet authorities announced a currency reform for their own zone, and declared that only their marks would be valid in Berlin. The Berlin city legislature refused to recognize the validity of this unilateral Soviet declaration, and the Western powers ordered the introduction of Trizonia's new currency into their sectors of Berlin. The Russians responded by stopping all trains from the West to Berlin and shutting off from the Western sectors of Berlin the three-fifths of their electric power which came from Russian-controlled sources.

To these Russian sanctions, American authorities replied that nothing short of war would force them out of Berlin. They seemed, moreover, to be in a position to back up their words, since it was technically feasible to bring in by air at least essential supplies for the German population as well as the Western garrison. And it did not seem likely that the Soviet Union was at this time ready to precipitate a war, even for the sake of sending Berlin's Social Democrats to Siberia.

More dangerous to the success of the new scheme than the opposition of the Soviet Union—which had, after all, been regarded as inevitable and discounted in advance—was the unwillingness of the great majority of West German political leaders to cooperate in putting it into effect. In part, this was because the establishment of a West German government had been joined in the communiqué with the setting up of an international control for the Ruhr, which—since the countries participating in it were for the most part competitors of the Ruhr, and since they were subject to no control—seemed to Germans to presage the permanent subordination of their economic interests to those of other countries. But even more fundamentally, it was because the new regime seemed almost as completely subject to the occupying powers as the old. Germans might have been willing to accept the division of their country as inevitable, in

view of the Russian attitude, if they had at least been given the right to run their own affairs in the Western part. But it was difficult for them to get up any enthusiasm at the idea of having it divided into two parts, neither of them free.

To be sure, the official explanations and clarifications given by General Lucius D. Clay made it appear that the new plan might be better in fact than the communiqué made it appear. He indicated that the Germans would be given an occupation statute, which would set forth the respective spheres of German authorities and Military Government, and limit the latter. And he said that there would be no objection to the assertion by the new government of a right to rule all Germany, including the Russian zone, when this became feasible in fact. Yet for the present, the weaknesses of the agreement furnished grist to the mill of both Communists and right-wing nationalist elements, and served to weaken further the democratic political parties, already compromised by their collaboration with occupying powers whose rule had coincided—and not altogether accidentally—with mass hunger and economic stagnation. The Western powers had set out to cross the Rubicon. But they were in grave danger of getting stuck in the mud three-fourths of the way over.

Hitler's Heirs

ALLIED occupation of Germany was, theoretically, intended to teach the Germans the error of Hitlerism and to reeducate them in the principles of democracy and racial equality. One of the victorious allies had been the Union of South Africa, a nation in which two million whites had absolute power, by virtue of the color of their skin, over four times as many members of the darker races. Even Mississippi appeared a center of liberalism in racial questions by comparison: South African natives were required to have permits for travel, for use of the streets at night, and for dozens of other things; they were debarred by law from professions and skilled employment; they were not allowed to hold public office, or even to vote; they were forbidden to join unions.

All this was under the relatively liberal rule of the United party, headed by Jan C. Smuts. But in the eyes of many of the Boers,

who constituted the majority of the white population, it was not enough. For Smuts had permitted the training of some native laborers in the building trades, so that they might build houses for the millions of other natives who were unable to obtain even barely livable homes. And he had sought to modify some of the worst abuses practised by white employers of native labor. Perhaps, also, many of the Boers resented the fact that Smuts—himself a Boer—tended to regard Englishmen and Jews as white. Many of the leaders of their principal party, the Nationalists, had admired the Nazis.

Now, under the leadership of Dr. Daniel F. Malan, they returned triumphantly to power. To be sure, they and their allies received, in a total vote of a little more than a million, approximately a hundred thousand votes less than the combined vote of the United party and the Labor party, which supported Smuts. But, since their major strength was in the over-represented rural areas, they won a clear majority in the South African Parliament.

There could be little doubt that the Nationalist victory meant the institution of further repressive measures against the native population. A similar fate seemed in store for the Union's Indian population, already up in arms over restrictions introduced by Smuts. (This was less certain, however, since it was possible that the Malan government would not care to risk a head-on conflict with India at this time.) For the Jews, its implication was not quite as clear, since Nationalist leaders had in the course of the campaign denied that their party was anti-Semitic. But the basis for any long range optimism seemed slight.

Two factors seemed to some to present some ground for hope. First, the United party still held a majority in the upper house, whose term still had some months to run. Second, the slim majority held by the Malan government would perhaps make it cautious in introducing extreme legislation, while at the same time creating the possibility of another election in the not too distant future. But, whatever the fate of the Malan government, there seemed little likelihood that even a return of the United party to power would result in any substantial progress toward democracy. For the racial laws of South Africa were even worse

today than they had been forty years ago. And Jan Smuts had been in power most of the intervening years.

Politics at Home

WHATEVER might be said of the Republicans and the Democrats, neither was likely to initiate a major attack on the liberties of racial, religious, or even political minorities. Certainly there were large groups in both parties who found bigotry congenial and regarded freedom as alien. But they were not in the saddle, and did not appear likely to be under either Harry S. Truman or Thomas E. Dewey. This was not to say that there were no differences between the two major parties. It was, however, difficult to discover what the differences were. Certainly the party platforms were not the place to look for them.

The statements and records of political leaders offered a somewhat more fruitful field of research. When President Truman, in the course of a "non-political" tour of the country, declared that the current Congress was the worst ever, Republican leaders leaped to its defense. (At least Governor Dewey's statement that the Congress had made a "remarkable" record was intended as a defense, however it sounded.)

Actually, the record of Congress—like that of the President—scarcely seemed to justify the extreme statements of either side. Certainly not all the acts of either had been characterized by careful consideration or mature wisdom. Yet, on the whole, both Congress and the President could be criticized more easily for the things they had not done than for those they had.

Perhaps the outstanding achievement of both was the passage of the Marshall Plan. Here too, there had been blunders, hesitations, and petty sniping which endangered the success of the program. Yet, for a while, Europe had been saved.

Labor condemned Congress for the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act over President Truman's veto. But Senator Taft had been responsible for the defeat of the President's proposal to break strikes by drafting work-

ers. And President and Congress had collaborated in weakening the Wage-Hour Act.

In the field of civil rights, no major advance had been achieved. Here the obstruction to progress came as usual from the Southern Democrats. But its success was made possible by the acquiescence of Northern Democrats and Republicans alike. On the other hand, neither Congress nor the President had yielded to those, such as Harold Stassen, who wished to undermine basic American liberties in the name of anti-Communism.

On housing, public health, and federal aid to education, the Congress had accomplished nothing, despite the efforts of Senator Taft. In respect to taxation, where the Roosevelt administration had increased the burdens of the poor much more than those of the rich, the Republican Congress now passed a tax-reduction bill considerably more beneficial to the upper brackets than the lower.

In regard to the problem of displaced persons, something was accomplished, but far less than was either needed or due from the world's richest country. President and Congress shared responsibility for the inadequate financing of the International Refugee Organization. And the Revercomb Bill, admitting 200,000 displaced persons over a period of two years at the expense of future quotas, was a feeble contribution. Moreover, it contained provisions which, whatever their intention, would serve to discriminate against Jewish immigrants. The most important of these was one denying the benefits of the bill to those who had entered DP camps within the past two years. All in all, the record of the United States still stood in unfavorable contrast to that of Britain. For that little island had admitted more DP's in the past year than the next three countries—the United States stood fourth—put together.

Certainly, the record of Congress had, in most fields, not been one of spectacular achievement. But it could point to at least one major accomplishment, as well as to some major mistakes. And in both, it shared responsibility with the President.

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

THE WAY IT IS IN BOGOTÁ

No Bed of Roses

JACOB GLATSTEIN

YOU'RE travelling from New York, so I'll try to give you a slight description of what it's like where I live. Imagine that you've gone mad, God save us, and you're set on going to Bogotá. When I say to you Colombia, Bogotá—with the accent on the *a*—you just hear names. If you know geography, well and good! In any case, you don't really know it. You get on a ship in New York and you go for seven days on the ocean until you arrive at a small town, Carthagena in Colombia. What a blessing, you're in Colombia! But wait, no farewells yet! You're not there yet! Your troubles are just beginning.

"You take a train to the Magdalena River. The Magdalena is the true 'Sambatyon' and

SOUTH America is also America; and "From the American Scene" this month takes us to Bogotá, Colombia. How does a Jew live in such an odd, faraway place? The poet JACOB GLATSTEIN found out from a fellow-traveler on an ocean voyage, and the account appears in his book *Ven Yash is Geforen* (1938), the first volume of a prose trilogy based on a trip to Poland before the war. Mr. Glatstein will be remembered by readers of COMMENTARY for his story "Citizen God" (May, 1947), and his long poem "The Bratzlav Rabbi to His Scribe" (November, 1946). Born in Lublin, Poland, in 1896, Mr. Glatstein came to New York in 1914. He has written extensively for Yiddish periodicals in this country, and has a considerable reputation both as a poet and prose writer. The second volume of the trilogy from which this brief selection is taken was published in 1940, and Mr. Glatstein is at work on the third volume. The translation printed here is by Abraham Goldstein.

the little red-bearded Jews who live on the other bank are us 'apes,' the peddlers who hustle and bustle to keep the pot full.

"So we're at the Magdalena. You travel by boat. Boat!—What a boat!—A wreck, a wooden box that drags along—one day, two days, three, four, five! And then all of a sudden you're on a train. What happened? The Magdalena is indisposed. Right there it's her whim to have a waterfall, which is good for neither boat nor passengers. So you go around it on a train until you reach the Magdalena again and continue on your way. After a while you come to a small town and take a train again, but this time to Bogotá, with the accent on the *a*.

"The train goes up and up until you're four thousand feet high, riding along by a coffee forest, with beautiful plantations, and the coffee drying in the sun. Coffee trees like it that high, in the cold mountain air. A coffee sapling, about as tall as a man, loves to have you slave and slave over it. Let me tell you, it's like the building of Pithom and Raamses before you get a little coffee in your cup. It's no sitting back and watching the coffee grow: you have to nurse the tree and keep it happy before it's any good to you. . . .

"Well, so you've had a free lecture and just because you're riding to Bogotá. Serves you right! You ride along like that for hours and hours, passing all those pretty villages, and then you come to Bogotá. . . . I've buried my best years there."

THE tall Bessarabian settles down and begins to talk about how he went to Ecua-

dor in 1922, when he was twenty, from there to Peru, and in the very first year he made ten thousand dollars peddling.

Why Ecuador? Why Peru? How does this happen to a Jewish boy? Well, you don't ask questions of life. It was a friend who got him to go to those places. To this friend he owes thanks for the good fortune that sticks in his throat like a bone.

In Peru, a thousand young men were already there—peddling. And he had always been a promoter, an organizer; he made himself manager of the peddlers. He loaned them money and merchandise, and he made his thirty per cent profit.

But in 1925 the atmosphere in Peru suddenly changed for Jews. The peddlers had to run off and of course they forgot to pay their debts. He went bankrupt.

Chile is also a country. So he popped up in Chile, dealt in hides, and pretty soon he had twenty-five thousand dollars. The Supreme One is a Father, and a hard-working young man doesn't get lost. With his twenty-five thousand dollars he came to Bogotá, Colombia, in 1929.

Thus began the chapter "Colombia"—"may it sink into the abyss!"

In Colombia he found several wealthy "Russian" coffee magnates and a few hundred Jewish young men—or "boys" as they are called there.

"Why 'boys'? Very simple—because they aren't married. That's where all the trouble is. You see? Four hundred young Jews go around, peddle, make a nice living. And if one of them wants to set up a home—as the Bible teaches—to lead a respectable family life, there's no one to do it with.

"Go deeply into our situation—a whole country without Jewish brides. No *shadchan* and no *badchan*, no marriage broker and no wedding bard. It's a terrible pity. Everything is with the buttered side down, because there's no Jewish wife with tender hands to take a fellow by his ear and say to him: Time to amount to something. Without a wife, what does life amount to?—hustle and bustle, no roots, nothing. Jewish houses stand empty and lament, and around the houses are trees and they lament too. Life is as normal as a pea on a wall, and just because there's no Sarah, no Rebecca, no Rachel, Leah, Deborah, Brindle, Zlota. Not one to be had! So you walk around like

half a person—one half is in Bogotá and the other half, the mate, doesn't exist.

"Bogotá has about thirty established Jewish families that haven't been long in the country and haven't yet had time to raise marriageable daughters. The few there were we caught up at their own terms, and now we're waiting for the young ones to grow up like waiting for the Messiah. What can you do? No Jewish girls!

"So you go around hungering and a bachelor. Some of the boys went off on the adventure of intermarriage with the Spanish-Indian-Negroid girls, but they've been no great success and are very poor examples for the other boys.

"Why we don't import some Jewish girls? Let them be ugly as death, cross-eyed and pock-marked, for us they'd be like angels out of heaven. With us their luck would shine like the sun! We'd chase them, we'd fight over them—duels! We'd sing serenades to them under their windows! But—ach!—what crazy woman is crazy enough to come to Bogotá?"

"But how does life flow in general?"

THE Bessarabian takes his time. Calmly, deliberately, but with a flow of words that have been lying deep, deep within him, he plucks at my heartstrings on behalf of this marooned tribe of his; he tries to throw on my shoulders responsibility for these newly-acquired relatives in this out-of-the-way community. My poor shoulders, which already bend lower and lower under the weight of Jewish brotherhood, Jewish blood—a whole world of Jews! Not only Rumania, Poland, America, Russia, Holland, France; there are Hindu Jews in Calcutta, yellow-skinned Jews with almond-shaped eyes in China, Yemenites, even Falashas; there are Arabian Jews in Algeria, Spanish Jews in Greece; and if that wasn't enough, now he comes along with this new trouble—Jewish suffering in Colombia.

"Maybe the climate's good for the natives. But not for Jews—cold, rainy, dreary. You go around all the time with a sour face. In Peru, it rains—within reason. In Colombia it pours, and it drenches body and being.

"What holds the young men together? Loneliness.

"We have a kind of society—*Ezrah*, mutual aid in case of need—for those who

have to be set on their feet again. Yom Kippur also brings us together a little. But it's not a Jewish Yom Kippur. We remember the prayers—*Kol Nidre* and *Unsehne Tokef*—so we hire a room where we gabble some liturgy. But the whole year long we're without religion, neither Sabbath nor holiday, and we work like mules.

"Do you think we have a shochet? Not even a shochet for the few score Jewish families and the 'boys.' Little by little we learn to eat *treife* meat, may it bring us no harm! A while ago we bought a little land for a Jewish cemetery. A few young men turned up their toes and had to be buried in the Christian cemetery. So we worked until we bought a strip of land for ourselves for after 120 years. So death is taken care of.

"But life is bitter. Don't think I yearn so much for the shochet, or the prayers. If we had at least something, at least what is known in refined language as *ideals*, it wouldn't be so bad. If not a prayerbook, let there at least be a Yiddish book, a newspaper. But to have nothing at all—you simply become lousy. If you're not religious, at least be informed, at least know what's going on in the world. But we're nothing but ignoramuses.

"So we're back where we started—healthy young men go around without wives, can't establish a home. Nevertheless they don't do any fasting. But what else can we do? A man can't sleep, night after night, all alone in a bachelor's bed. You can't hang a lock on human nature. You can't show the thumb to the Evil One, who won't let himself be swindled or driven off by incantations.

"We're so hungry for wives that some of us pick out a small Colombian girl while she's going to school. The young man

immediately negotiates the marriage and brings her up. For the Colombian parents it's a stroke of luck. The Jew pays all her expenses and rears a wife.

"We have several couples like that. The Colombian women have even become converts, and so far things are going along smoothly: the women are accustomed to their husbands from childhood on. One of them, a delicate child, fainted twice last Yom Kippur, but she completed the fast. And even though they're so much younger than their husbands, they stick to them, their 'governesses' who raised them for little wives almost on their knees. But such fortunate cases are an exception. How many people can have the patience to pick a small girl and sit down and wait?

"In short, you see for yourself it's far from a pleasant life. When Sunday comes you go around all morning collecting the debts of the week. In the afternoon you sit down to some card playing. On this you expend a great deal of passion and also lose two or three hundred dollars. Then you take a bath to wash off the dust that collects during the week, and you sit down again to play cards. At night you go to a dance hall where you hire a girl for six cents a dance.

"The next day is Monday. You get up with a bitter taste in the mouth and go back to working like a mule.

"Passover is somewhat of a break. Some forty young men get together in a house and stuff themselves and get drunk. The Haggadah isn't read. The gluttony, however, is a souvenir of the holiday. And there you have our entire spiritual life. It's lucky that the Jewish cemetery is flourishing and waiting for the end!"

CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE LAWS OF MARTYRDOM

When Can a Jew Give Up His Life?

MAIMONIDES

IN ALL religions, as well as in many non-religious movements, martyrdom is regarded as the supreme act of devotion. A doctrine that claims ultimate truth must also be able to claim the ultimate sacrifice. However, the terms on which the sacrifice is demanded—and accepted—vary radically, and in this variation is displayed the uniqueness of each doctrine.

Modern extremist nationalism, for instance, sets no terms outside political expediency: its martyrdom is the blind sacrifice of robots bound by geography to the fortunes of their political leaders: "theirs not to reason why." Christian martyrdom has its own distinctive coloration, derived from its depreciation of this-worldly things: to die for one's faith is to escape from the bondage of the suffering flesh into an eternity of bliss—it is an *opportunity*, an unmixed blessing.

JEWISH martyrdom is much more complicated. This is in part the result of historical experience. Having known martyrdom on a scale and with a relentlessness that is unparalleled, Jews have tried to contain its emotional aspects within bounds (without weakening its tragic sublimity) lest it unduly encourage suicidal self-sacrifice and threaten the survival of the

group. At the same time, the Judaic concept of Torah (law) as both divine commandment and everyday human practice has tended to emphasize the rule of reason as well as the (never doubted) rule of the Absolute. Just what, in specific circumstances, is to be man's relationship to his life and his death is deemed too important—both for God and man—to be left to the enthusiastic decision of the individual.

The following excerpt from MAIMONIDES' *Mishnah Torah* exemplifies the scrupulousness with which traditional Jewish thought approaches the problem of martyrdom. Living in North Africa in the last half of the 12th century, Maimonides experienced persecution at first hand; and as the foremost Jewish thinker of his era, he was called on by Jews of all lands, time and again, for counsel and guidance.

This elucidation of the laws governing martyrdom, with their practical reference and sober tone, may give some indication as to why his counsel was so highly revered.

These passages were translated by Shlomo Katz, who took his text from S. Niger's *Kidush Hashem*, an anthology of the literature of martyrdom.—ED.

THE entire House of Israel is commanded to sanctify the Great Name, for it is written: I will be sanctified among the children of Israel; and they are warned not to desecrate it, for it is written: You should not desecrate my holy name.

What does this mean? If a *kuthi* (unbeliever) will arise and force a Jew to break

one of the commandments of the Torah on pain of death, he should break the commandment and not be killed, for it is said of the commandments, if a man abide by them he shall live. He shall live by them and not die through them. If he dies rather than break them, he is guilty for his soul.

When does this apply? When all the

commandments are at stake, excepting idol-worshiping, adultery, and murder. Where these three prohibitions are concerned, if a Jew is told, break one of them or else you will be killed, it is best he should permit himself to be killed and not transgress. When does the preceding rule apply? If the *kuthi* wishes to gain personal advantage. For instance, he compels the Jew to build a house for him on the Sabbath, or cook his food [on the Sabbath] or similar acts.

But if his [the *kuthi's*] intention is merely to force the Jew to transgress the commandments?

If the Jew is alone and not in the presence of ten other Jews, then he should transgress and not be killed. But if he is ordered to commit the sin in the presence of ten Jews, he should rather allow himself to be killed and not transgress, even when the intention is merely to force him to transgress one of the other commandments [i.e., not one of the three enumerated above].

All this applies in times when there are no decrees forcing Jews to give up their faith. But in times of such decrees, when an evil ruler arises, such as Nebuchadnezzar and his like, and decrees that Jews do away with their religion or any one of its commandments, [the Jew] should permit himself to be killed rather than transgress any of the commandments, whether he is ordered to do so in the presence of ten other Jews, or is alone among Gentiles.

ANYONE to whom the rule applies that he should transgress and not be killed, and he allows himself to be killed and does not transgress, is guilty for his life. Anyone to

whom the rule applies that he should rather be killed and not transgress, and he does indeed get killed rather than transgress, such a person sanctified the Name. If he was among ten Jews, he sanctified the Name in public, like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and Rabbi Akiba and his comrades, and there is no higher degree than this. Of them it is said: For your sake we are slaughtered all day, we are like sheep led to slaughter. . . .

And one of whom it is said he should allow himself to be killed rather than transgress, and he was not killed, he desecrated the Name. If he was among ten Jews he desecrated the Name in public, he transgressed the positive commandment to sanctify the Name and also transgressed the negative commandment not to desecrate the Name.

Women to whom Gentiles have said: Surrender to us one of you and we will defile her, otherwise we will defile all of you—it is better that all be defiled and they should not surrender to them a Jewish soul.

Similarly if Gentiles have said to Jewish men: Surrender to us one from your midst and we will kill him, otherwise we will kill all of you—they should allow themselves to be killed and not surrender to them a Jewish life.

And if they point to an individual and say: Surrender to us this man, otherwise we will kill all of you—if the man pointed out is deserving of death, like Sheva Ben Bichri, they may surrender him. But they should not be instructed in advance to do so. And if he is not deserving of death, they should all allow themselves to be killed and not surrender a single Jewish life.

THE STUDY OF MAN

PREJUDICE AND CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION

Does Economics Explain Racism?

OSCAR HANDLIN

IN THE brief period of the past quarter-century we have seen a tragic succession of horrors—Smyrna to Auschwitz to Nagasaki—challenge the essential brotherhood of all people, and the assumption, upon which modern civilization rests, that personal dignity is inherent in the condition of human beings.

We have learned much about the role of race hatred in these brutal assaults upon our common heritage, and we have accumulated much information concerning the nature and effect of the various divisive doctrines that have

It is a natural tendency to try to find some single key for the understanding of complex problems, and this tendency is perhaps especially understandable when the problem is the urgent and ugly one of anti-Semitism and racial prejudice. One of the more popular theses of our day is that which explains prejudice as an exploitative tool of capitalism; OSCAR HANDLIN here subjects this economic view to appraisal, through a critical examination of three recent books which project and endeavor to document the theory. The best-known of the three is Carey McWilliams' widely-discussed *A Mask for Privilege* (Boston; Little, Brown, and Company, 1948); the others, of comparable significance, are: *Conception Matérialiste de la Question Juive*, by A. Léon (Paris, Editions Pionniers, 1946) and *Caste, Class, and Race* by Oliver Cromwell Cox (New York, Doubleday, 1948). Dr. Handlin is assistant professor of social sciences at Harvard and is the author of *Commonwealth* (1946), *The Immigrant in American Politics* (1944), *Boston's Immigrants* (1941), as well as numerous articles in *COMMENTARY* and other journals. He was born in 1915, was graduated from Brooklyn College, and received his doctorate from Harvard.

attempted to create different categories of men. Yet, despite all the attention lavished on the problem by social scientists, we are still far from any satisfactory estimate of the weight of the various factors involved in the racist complex.

Serious students have approached this subject by three different avenues. Some have treated racism as a system of ideas, and have tried to discover the origin and to trace the formal development of such ideas in diverse times and places. Such studies have the virtue of simplicity and definiteness. Their shortcomings result from the fact that racism is important not so much for the manner in which it is expressed intellectually, as for the impulses which generate it. As philosophy, as history, as sociology, the works of Gobineau, Rosenberg, Chamberlain, and Stoddard have little significance. On the other hand, they are immensely valuable as reflections of deep social trends.

Another group of investigators has taken as its point of departure an analysis of the types of personality susceptible to racist influences. There have been very useful examinations of the character structure of individuals, of the channels through which racist conceptions are acquired, and of the agencies through which prejudice is generated and spread. But such studies are enlightening only within narrow limits. For personality is itself conditioned by social forces; in the last analysis, the search for understanding must reach into the broad social context within which personality is shaped.

Accordingly, a third approach concentrates upon the nature of the background against which prejudice develops, and seeks the causes of prejudice in the structure of society. Some

analysts of the problem, from this point of view, proceed under the supposition that the condition is organic—that is, an unavoidable aspect of the harmonious operation of the social system. W. Lloyd Warner, Allison Davis, and John Dollard, for instance, describe the American South in terms of a series of necessary adjustments that involve prejudice but that enable Negroes and whites to live together. Other writers who also concentrate upon the background nevertheless regard prejudice as pathological, a manifestation of some failing in the social system.

Three recent books present striking statements of this conception of group prejudice as a social disease. Two of these volumes deal with the Jews, the other with the Negroes. From the point of view of subject matter, then, they offer an opportunity for significant comparison, since prejudice against Jews is generally believed to involve cultural or national differentiations, whereas prejudice against Negroes is conceived of as involving physical or racial differentiations. In addition, the three have in common an identical conception of the nature of the disease; all find it related to exploitation in Western capitalist society.

PERHAPS more than any other writer, Carey McWilliams has made popular the cause of America's "minorities" and has exposed the dangers that lie in all the manifestations of prejudice. He enjoys a quick and easy pen; he has a knack for assimilating scholarly opinions and making them readable; and he has strong opinions—on the whole, good ones.

This work is, however, one of his weaker efforts. It labors under the burden of an untenable thesis and is all too often careless in matters of detail.

The key to the book is its title. For Mr. McWilliams, anti-Semitism in the United States has been always a "mask for privilege." The development of industrialism between 1860 and 1877 left patent injustices in the structure of American society. By the latter year, "the industrial bourgeoisie had triumphed." Once triumphant, "the industrial tycoons discovered that they could not function within the framework of the social and political ideals of the early Republic. To insure their triumph, a new social order had to be established." That new order involved the creation of a status system to protect the position of the privileged classes. "To trick a freedom-loving people into accept-

ing industrial regimentation in the name of democracy, the tycoons of the period needed a diversionary issue." They therefore devised a counter-tradition to oppose the democratic tradition, and they based that counter-tradition on the myth of anti-Semitism, first applying it in the social, then in the economic, and finally, in recent times, in the political sphere. A pattern of exclusion, first established in resorts, clubs, and colleges, restricts the opportunities open to Jews and drives them into marginal occupations. As capitalism approaches its crisis, concentration in undesirable trades leaves the Jews in an exposed position, increasingly open to attack by groups like the Columbians.

To prove his position, McWilliams must argue that a single line of development generated anti-Semitism in the United States. He therefore assumes throughout that all anti-Semitic forces grew up indigenously within the country. On the level of ideology, he fails to treat the influence of the works of Gobineau, Lapouge, Drumont, and Chamberlain. On the practical level, he does not mention the impact of German government propaganda in the 1930's through such agencies as the Friends of New Germany, the German-American Bund, and George Sylvester Viereck.

Again, since he must attribute the whole to the activities of the tycoons, he consistently slurs over the influence of liberal thinkers tainted with anti-Semitic ideas. Yet in the total perspective, Edward A. Ross and John R. Commons, who meant well but who popularized racist conceptions, probably had a wider effect than did outright champions of "Aryanism" like Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard. Bolstered by the prestige of academic position, of affiliation with worthy causes, and of good intentions, the books of the liberals were doubly dangerous because they did not carry the poison labels of the openly biased.

Similarly, Mr. McWilliams disregards the part played by organized farmers and laborers. There is not a reference to the fact that populist hatred of Wall Street sometimes fell into the anti-Semitic pattern. There is no recognition of the fact that trade unions also adopted exclusionist practices. No more vicious racist ideas were ever expressed than those spewed out by Samuel Gompers in the AFL campaign against the Chinese. If these same ideas were ultimately used against the Jews, that only illustrates further the complexity of the subject and the dangers of over-simplification.

THE most misleading implications of *A Mask for Privilege* arise from the proposition that the position of the Jews as objects of prejudice is unique in American society. McWilliams does not make clear, for example, that the prejudiced comments he quotes at one point (page 68) were directed against all new immigrants and not only against Jews. One would never learn from his book that Americans of Irish descent experience the same difficulties as Jews in penetrating the elite social clubs, that the sons of Italian parents also face quota barriers when they seek admission to medical and dental schools, and that the Ku Klux Klan between 1920 and 1928 was decidedly more hostile to Catholics than to Jews. It may offer no consolation to anyone, but it must certainly influence one's estimate of the problem to realize that, until the 1930's, there was no anti-Semitic movement in the United States that was not also anti-Catholic.

To support the contention that the Jews occupy a unique position, McWilliams argues that they have been crowded, by prejudice, into a marginal and insecure role in the American economy: they are excessively concentrated in the professional and white-collar occupations; they engage in consumption and in distribution rather than in basic production, in light rather than in heavy industry. He sees the anomalous position of the Jews as basically due to their forced adjustment to exclusion from the more desirable places in the economy. Anti-Semitic bias, he points out, "more than any other single factor . . . has brought about the peculiar distribution of Jews on the check-board of our economic system."

This line of reasoning rests upon two erroneous suppositions, first, that Jews could get the most desirable places if they were not thus handicapped, and second, that the conception of what are the most desirable places is the same among all people. To McWilliams the fact that only 33 of the 420 directors of New York banks are Jews, that only three of the mass-circulation magazines are owned by them, and that in "not a single sector of the heavy industry front" does their influence "amount to dominance or control" is evidence of discrimination. But it could just as well—or just as badly—be argued, in view of the recency of Jewish settlement and in view of the poverty of the Jews when they arrived, that to produce almost ten per cent of the bank directors in the financial capital of

the nation is evidence of a *lack* of discrimination. It is certainly relevant to point out that the representation in banking and in heavy industry of other groups descended from recent immigrants is no larger.

Conclusive evidence on this point comes from the situation in agriculture. The American farm is individually owned. Prejudice can bar from this occupation no one who has the capital; and for more than half a century a melancholy succession of unsuccessful organizations have stood ready to provide Jews with the capital. If Jews have not become tillers of the soil in America, it is not because they could not but because they would not. Does this not indicate that such groups have their own occupational preferences?

Finally, McWilliams depends entirely upon the power of coincidence to explain the beginnings of anti-Semitism, and he endows the American capitalists with amazing foresight in relating social to economic discrimination. A prominent Jewish banker was excluded from a Saratoga hotel in 1877, the year of the triumph of the industrial bourgeoisie. That this "first overt manifestation of anti-Semitism in the United States took place in 1877 is to be explained," McWilliams holds, "in terms of the corrosion which the industrial revolution had brought about in the American scheme of values." That American values were so instantly and automatically corroded is itself rather far-fetched. More important, this explanation implies that those who excluded Seligman envisaged and consciously planned the subsequent development of the status system and of the pattern of economic discrimination that emerged thirty years later. This rational conspiracy, simple and all-embracing, is dubious on the face of it and does not square with the character of American capitalists at the turn of the century. But without such a conspiracy there is a fatal gap in McWilliams' argument.

THE idea of economic marginality, applied in *A Mask for Privilege* to the American scene, was earlier applied by some thinkers to the role of the Jews in the European economy. Dov Ber Borochoy, for one, believed that a normal distribution of occupations took the form of a pyramid, with the great mass of the population concentrated in agriculture and in the heavy industries, and tapering off in numbers through distribution, light industry, trade,

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and the professions. In the case of the Jews, the pyramid was reversed, and their difficulties were ascribed to the fact that they lacked the security of a proper base in the productive system. This theory accounted for the great effort by progressive Jewish leadership to "productivize" the Jews of Eastern Europe, and was also at the root of certain elements of Zionist ideology.

The question of how and why this situation came to exist has usually been skirted. McWilliams, too, passes the question by with the comment that it is interesting but irrelevant. But the importance of the problem did not escape the attention of a young Polish Jew who spent most of his short life in Belgium. As a member of Hashomer Hatzair—a left-wing Zionist group—Abram Léon absorbed Borochov's interpretation of the Jewish situation, and his awareness of the problem must certainly have been sharpened during the war, when he became a member of the section of the anti-German underground allied with the Fourth International. Actively engaged in the resistance movement, he nevertheless found time to compose a shrewd analysis of the historical sources of the Jewish economic position, and had just about finished this book when he was arrested. In Auschwitz, at the age of 26, he met the fate of millions of his fellows.

Léon's approach is that of the orthodox Marxist (by this, I do not mean to dismiss, but only to identify his point of view). His analysis, despite errors of detail, is refreshingly lucid and sensible, and it offers us the opportunity to examine a solid statement of the materialistic interpretation of the Jewish question.

Running through two and a half millenia of the Jewish past, Léon finds two points of crisis in the secular history of that people. The first crisis occurred at the point when the economy of the Roman empire broke down and gave way to the kind of natural economy associated in Western Europe with feudalism, a mode of production characterized by self-sufficient agriculture and the absence of commerce. This transformation coincided with the emergence, as state religions, first of Christianity and then of Islam. Léon believes that these developments set in motion a selective process that froze the Jews in commerce; that is, the settled Jewish farmers tended to be absorbed by the dominant creeds, and only those continued to adhere to Judaism who had the relative independence of the trader's status.

At this stage, Léon continues, a rigid and exceptional occupational pattern was fixed upon the Jews. In the long period until the 13th century, while the whole of Europe lived by agriculture, the Jews engaged in itinerant trade. And since all those with whom the Jews dealt were self-sufficient, that commerce of necessity centered largely on the importation of luxuries and catered to the tastes of the nobility, who alone had the surpluses to pay for them. Of necessity also, the Jews engaged in usury to finance the feudal lords in the frequent intervals when the manors failed to produce sufficient surplus. Naturally, the status of the Jews was high and they enjoyed the protection of the highly-placed.

THIS relatively pleasant situation began to change in the era of the Crusades. The natural economy disintegrated as exchange developed. But now commerce and mercantile capital were directly connected with production; the objects of trade were no longer exotic luxuries, but the products of industry. (The famous Italian banking houses, for instance, established themselves in the woolen business.)

The Jewish merchants, unable to enter the new commerce, were gradually excluded from all trade. Consequently they were compelled to live by usury and by its ancillary occupations, pawnbroking and dealing in second-hand goods. In this role they battered off the nobility and off the townspeople who ultimately became their bitter enemies. For a time the sovereign, who profited by extorting the wealth of his subjects through the Jews, offered some protection. But ultimately the hostility of the new middle class and the gentry led to harsh measures, to the growth of the ghetto, and finally to exclusion. A remnant of Jews saved themselves only by migrating eastward to Poland and Bohemia, less-developed regions still in the natural economy stage.

Thereafter the Jews hung on in the West only on a very marginal basis until the end of the 18th century, when emancipation loosed the old restrictions and assimilative forces began steadily to absorb the new citizens into the sprouting national states. But at that very moment the position of the Eastern Jews, which had been quite favorable until then, began to deteriorate through the workings of the same forces which had operated in the West several centuries earlier. In Poland and in Russia, a new middle class rising from the disintegration

of the old economy was jealous of the place of the Jews in commerce and in the professions. Competition for status led to political restrictions upon the Jews and to emigration to France, Germany, and England, which only worsened the position of their co-religionists in the West.

At this point the internal contradictions of capitalism deprive the Jews, a marginal group at best, of the last vestiges of security. Excluded from the cartels of the great capitalists, the Jews are driven into speculation, a development which offers the monopolists an opportunity to divert the discontent of the masses to the Jews alone. Theorists begin to distinguish between "bad" (speculative) capital and "useful" (productive) capital, terms which Nazi economists eventually translate into parasitic-Jewish and productive-national. Ultimately the masses fall subject to a new ideology which identifies speculative capitalism with Judaism, and contrasts it with a planned national socialist economy, which is really war capitalism. Under the successive blows of persecution in the name of this ideology, the Jews are helpless and take refuge in a nationalism of their own.

BY THIS survey Léon attempts to demonstrate that the Jewish question is the outcome of an identification of the Jewish group, through definite historical circumstances, with certain limited occupations which the rest of the society finds inferior or degrading or hostile. The questions raised in specific form by Léon with reference to the Jews, are essentially the same as those treated by Oliver Cromwell Cox in a more general way: basically, both men are concerned with the phenomena of caste, class, and race, and of the relationships between them. Unfortunately, Mr. Cox's enormously prolix volume, winner of the George Washington Carver award, falls far short of its goal.

The book is cluttered up with the deceptive paraphernalia of scholarship. But through it runs a very simple thesis, which must be understood before the mazes of the argument can be unravelled. The following quotations will make clear the author's point of view and will also throw light upon his methods. In a discussion of the modern state, Cox writes: "From the standpoint of degrees of development of democracy in the three great nations of the world . . . the United States is probably most backward and Russia farthest advanced." Of the New Deal, he writes: "Most of what [Franklin

Roosevelt] said and did was really democratic and consequently socialistic or communistic."

These sentences illustrate Cox's peculiar use of language; words are divorced from their usual meanings and endowed with esoteric identities known only to the author. In the fantastic sequences of seeming inaccuracies it is hard to differentiate between what is only double talk and what is really error of fact. In the following *mélange*, the reader may decide for himself: The Hindus "never attained a conception of nationality." There is only one political party in the United States "with two factions: Republicans and Democrats." Mercantilism is state capitalism. A ruling class is always intolerant. "Businessmen constitute our ruling class." Democracy "is in fact communism." De Tocqueville was an advocate of democracy. "The bourgeoisie is unalterably opposed to democracy." Russia is the only foe of fascism; most respectable Americans are fascists; southern poor whites are not hostile to the Negro; the late Senator Bilbo was a spokesman of capitalism. And no previous scholars revealed these truths because their "bread and butter" depended upon "avoiding the study of contemporary class conflict."

Beyond these semantic diversions lies the central thesis: Cox views racial antagonism as one of the fundamental traits of the class struggle within the capitalist system. Prejudice is, to his mind, an attitude built up by the capitalists to keep control over the proletariat they exploit.

The point is made in a long, tortuous argument complicated by Mr. Cox's difficulty in defining race in such a way as to take in the Negroes in the United States and not much more. What finally emerges, however, is somewhat broader than that. For if a race is "any group of people that is generally believed to be, and generally accepted as, a race in any given area of ethnic competition," then the Chinese in California, the Jews in Nazi Germany, the Italians in Australia, the Mexicans in Texas, and the French-Canadians in Maine are also races.

But many of the groups just named found their most prejudiced persecutors not among the capitalists. Cox therefore must reason that any antagonisms not inspired by the capitalists, despite his definition, are not really race conflicts. He disposes thus of the anti-Oriental movement on the Pacific coast, which—inconveniently—was led by workingmen, indeed by

the trade unions. Likewise, the Jews who faced hostility even before the rise of capitalism are, he says, never victims of race prejudice, only of intolerance.

SIMILARLY, to demonstrate that racial antagonism cannot exist without capitalism, a long section of the book is devoted to demolishing the thesis that the caste system of India was a product of pre-capitalist color prejudices. Cox's refutation is convincing, although his own explanation of the causes is open to question. At the same time he seizes the occasion to lay a basis for comparison between the idyllic Hindus and the horrid capitalists. He manages, for example, to overlook the terrible punishments meted out to violators of the caste laws and thus finds no violence in the caste system; in his view, the depressed portions of society, by persuasion, happily grant privileges to their superiors. Later this description of India serves also as the point of departure for an unjustified attack upon Gunnar Myrdal, who uses the term caste in quite another sense.

Having tied race prejudice to Western capitalism, Cox proceeds to show, by another ingenious exercise in terminology, that prejudice is an aspect of the class struggle inherent in capitalism. He creates an entity, the "political class," which, by definition, is a "power group" struggling for control of the state. In our day, then, there are two political classes, the challengers of the status quo and its defenders, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the Communists and the non-Communists.

Cox does not trouble to relate his "political class" to any social or economic groupings that can be shown to exist in the real world and which he variously denominates "estate," "social class," and "functional class." Consequently he finds no difficulty in emerging with the conclusion that there can be no solution to prejudice short of the violent overthrow of the capitalist system by revolution, which, in view of the premises and of the methods employed, is not altogether surprising.

What is surprising is how close this position brings the author to the racist's own picture of race relations. Like the most reactionary white southerner, although for different reasons, Mr. Cox argues that laws against lynching must necessarily be ineffective, that there can be no contact between races without either conflict or amalgamation, and that whites act as a unit in opposition to blacks.

FOR all their differences, the three books before us have a basic element in common: all regard prejudice as an instrument used by capitalists to justify or to increase exploitation.

Such a theory must pass the test of one crucial question: why should one group rather than another be selected as the object of prejudice? And, indeed, each of the three books, in one way or another and in some degree, attempts to demonstrate that occupational peculiarity in the group singled out renders it particularly susceptible to its role as object of the exploiter's prejudice.

Insofar as McWilliams confronts this problem, his solution is essentially the same as that of Abram Léon: that concentration in certain marginal employments leaves the Jews vulnerable. But the mere fact that Jews cluster in certain callings cannot explain the appearance of anti-Semitism. Faith in such an explanation rests on the questionable assumption that some occupations are, of their nature, undesirable. The distinction between productive and unproductive trades sometimes made by economists—Marxist as well as orthodox—is not one that greatly influences popular values; witness the attitudes towards movie stars and athletes. In modern times, at least, people have measured the agreeableness and the utility of any employment by the yardsticks of income and status, and, if Jewish callings seem less desirable than others, it is because they somehow fall short in terms of those criteria.

So far as income is concerned, there would seem to be no disabilities connected with Jewish occupations; no one has ever charged that Jews made too little money. But inferiority of status is undoubtedly attached to trades that are distinctively Jewish. That inferiority is not, however, inherent in the trade. On the contrary, it arises from the fact that Jews are in the trades; these are "Jewish businesses."

Most important of all, concentration in a limited number of occupations is characteristic of all ethnic groups and not simply of those, like the Jews and Negroes, who suffer from prejudice. Some, like the Quakers in the United States and the Scots in England, to name only two, display a markedly eccentric occupational pattern and still attain an exceptionally high social status. In our society, there is a kind of hereditary element in occupation as in every other aspect of culture; skills, training, values, and opportunities are, to some extent, handed down from fathers to sons, even in the most

fluid economies. No ethnic group is normal, because normality in this sense can only be an average of many ethnic groups.

But if our society comprehends a multitude of ethnic groups, all differentiated to some degree in economic structure, then prejudice cannot be explained simply in terms of exploitation. Why should the exploiter direct his prejudice against one group rather than another? Neither McWilliams nor Léon can, in these terms, explain why the Jews should be the "chosen people." And Mr. Cox cannot explain why Americans did not single out the white as well as the black unfree servants.

Nor is there any accounting for the difference in tastes of the capitalists of other countries. Why should the Brazilians and Frenchmen not have picked on the Negroes? Why should color be a bar to a Hindu in India but not in England? Why should capitalist prejudice anywhere not have taken a quite different form?

THESE are important questions. It may not be possible to answer them now. But neither is it possible to evade them. If we can do no more than point to the elements that must enter into the answers, that will still be better than to act as if the questions did not exist.

It is significant that such problems have so far yielded more readily to the insight of the novelist than to the analysis of the social scientist. E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, for instance, is more "true" as an account of prejudice than any of the books before us. One factor in its superiority is undoubtedly the willingness of its author to deal with the phenomenon as a complex and intricate reaction; he is not bound by the scientist's compulsion to reduce all the facts to a single, simple formula. Forster is free to find that prejudice is not the rational expression of the will of the person who holds the bias, that it arises out of a total situation of which the prejudiced and the object of his prejudice are both victims.

Economic exploitation is somehow involved in the creation of that situation. In rejecting the schematic economic determinism that links prejudice directly with exploitation, we need not also reject the older Marxist hypothesis that economic factors set the underlying conditions for group hatreds. There is evidence enough that, in some way, exploitation, an expression of economic ill-being, meshes in with prejudice, an expression of cultural ill-being. The difficulty is to define the relationship.

A clue to the solution may lie in the fact that exploitation creates a sense of social uneasiness in which there is room for, and psychological and political utility in, prejudiced behavior. It would certainly be worthwhile to explore the nature of that uneasiness and its connection with the whole life of a culture—religious, ideological, esthetic, as well as economic. It is very likely that this is the most fertile area for future study in this field.

Some aspects seem clear already. A society weighed down by such uneasiness finds relief by dividing against itself, in other words, by sanctioning the hatred by some of its members of others. When depression or political crisis exacerbates uneasiness, the impulse to seek such relief becomes more compelling and the cathartic hatreds more intense.

Those hatreds are, of course, not always oriented along ethnic lines. Sometimes people bear prejudices against "reds" and "unions," against "capitalists" and "Wall Street." But at other times that bias takes an ethnic direction, and then acquires a special depth, or, perhaps, an entirely different quality.

It will not be enough, in explanation, to say that an ethnic group exists, has a distinctive character, and therefore becomes an object of prejudice. The qualities of Jews and Negroes before those peoples became the objects of prejudice are, for instance, only slightly relevant: the "non-Aryans" against whom Hitler acted and the colored people who are segregated in Louisiana are not groups that could have been defined in any economic, cultural, religious, or physical terms that existed in advance of the onset of prejudice. Those groupings are themselves the outcome of the prejudice situation.

It is not the difference, real or fancied, between the object and the subject of prejudice that is significant, but rather the condition of a whole society of which both are components, necessary to each other. Persecuted and persecutors are intimately alike in their condition as human beings. Isolated from each other in the cities amid the machines, men can no longer recognize the brotherly gesture. Out of desperate uncertainty comes a longing for likeness, and then the dreadful consummation: to find oneness, the brothers divide, some through hatred against their father's other sons, others through being hated. And not these or those made the hatred come, but the trouble that enveloped all.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Sartre and the Jews

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I sincerely hope that with the current installment of Sartre's articles, the outrage has come to an end. I have always suspected that the Sartre fad is a disease rather than a philosophy. Since I have read what has to be thought of—and done to—the Jews in order to suit this philosophy, I am sure that it is the worst thing that could befall us after the death of Hitler and Jabotinsky. The most discouraging feature of these articles is that their argument is as unanswerable as any pseudo-psychological philosophy. Anyone who would try to gainsay M. Sartre has been taken care of in advance by calling him an "inauthentic Jew." A philosophy which in this way disposes of disagreement is basically dishonest, and I only wonder how, of all things, just a Jewish magazine had to fall for it.

HENRY PAECHTER

(A thoroughly inauthentic Jew)

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is with sincere gratitude that I thank Jean-Paul Sartre for his comprehensive and understanding analysis of the Jew in his recent articles. M. Sartre, through his writings, really gets under "the skin of the Jew." I must admit that his articles have helped me learn more about myself as a Jew than any other piece of literature that I have ever read.

ARNOLD SMITH

Brooklyn, New York

The Two Traditions

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In your May issue, Abraham Joshua Heschel offers us a choice between "The Two Great Traditions," the Ashkenazic and the Sephardic, as possible models for a cultural pattern of American Jewish life. Undoubtedly, he prefers the tradition of Eastern Europe, but this personal admiration for the inwardness and the unique insights of Ashkenazic Judaism, even if shared and appreciated by larger circles of American Jews, will in itself not be enough

to bring about its universal acceptance as our way of life.

It seems to me that the choice is not ours, but has been made for us already by the nature of our American environment. The Sephardic approach toward Judaism appears and re-appears whenever a Jewish community is located in an area of high cultural development in which it is permitted to participate. In Hellenistic Alexandria, in medieval Spain, in Renaissance Italy (to a smaller extent), and in modern Central and Western Europe and in America, Judaism could not resist the powerful influence of the majority culture, but produced a peculiar synthesis of Jewish and general values. So long as Eastern Europe remained on a relatively low cultural level, the Jews were isolated there and could confine their attention to their own heritage exclusively. It is instructive to note that in the 19th century, when Eastern Europe advanced considerably in its cultural development, the character of Jewish life began to change also, with the growth of the Enlightenment and the emergence of a secular literature in Hebrew and Yiddish based on non-Jewish examples.

These external factors are far more powerful than any personal nostalgia for a way of life which may have had its own singular charm, but which could be practiced only in isolation from all other distracting cultural influences. It is true that we can weave some of the gems of the Ashkenazic tradition into our pattern of life and that they will add luster and color to our life, but basically the neo-Sephardic pattern, as Dr. Heschel calls it, is indicated for American Jewry by the nature of our relationship with the surrounding world.

RABBI THEODORE WIENER

Temple Beth-El
Corsicana, Texas

The Immigrant Type

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the May issue of COMMENTARY, I read with great interest Mr. Moses Kligsberg's comments on the autobiographies collected by the Yivo in its contest in 1942. . . .

However, since the method involves an in-

tropective account of motives and an estimate of values, all expressed in language and considered in retrospect, the difficulties in analyzing the results are great. Many problems are called forth by this method; it would be unreasonable to expect the author to treat them all in his article. But let me point to some which, I think, should have been taken into account.

The autobiographies were written in the early 40's, when the Jewish population in Europe had been penned up in the Hitler slaughter-house, and America was engaged in a life-and-death struggle against that most ferocious of our enemies. . . . Is it not reasonable to assume that this might have affected the attitudes of the writers toward their original homes as well as toward America?

In addition, there is the old problem of sampling. To write an autobiography is a task not easily undertaken by the average man. Hence, it stands to reason that only a select group responded. It would be necessary to envisage this possibility before subscribing to generalizations embracing the immigrant population as a whole.

Lastly, there is the matter of language. Reactions expressed in stories may be colored by motives which do not necessarily stem from the reality which they attempt to portray . . . especially in a contest where social recognition is involved.

Mr. Klugsberg reaches the conclusion that "the Jewish immigrant community in the United States is by and large a concentration of one social-psychological type, that is, the enterprising, independent, activist person with a strong individualistic attitude." Needless to say, this is a generalization of first importance. Considering the precautions which the author does take in his analysis of the Yivo material, he has given us an amount of evidence for his opinion which, I hope, will not fail to attract the attention of subsequent research.

LEIBUSH LEHRER

Yiddish Scientific Institute
New York City

A New Sabbatianism?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read with great interest the excellent article by Hannah Arendt in the May issue of COMMENTARY, with its clear warning against the new Sabbatian intoxication which seems to have seized Jewry and which will lead, psychologically and politically, to more tragic consequences than the first Sabbatian movement did. . . .

Miss Arendt's article, together with those by Robert Weltsch in the April issue, and

Hal Lehrman in the March issue, represent the best that has been written in America recently on the Palestine situation.

HANS KOHN

Institute for Advanced Study
Princeton, New Jersey

Germans and Jews

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I cannot let Samuel Gringauz's article on "Our New German Policy and the DP's" in the June COMMENTARY pass without protest. For those Americans who have no direct experience of the German situation today, the conclusion to be drawn from reading the article is that all Germans have a "bestial hatred of Jews," a hatred which is still on the increase.

I am sure that few of the Jews working in our military government and fewer still of those who have returned to Germany to teach or do other work will agree. I know personally several in both categories who have won considerable affection among the German population and found no hostility whatever. The number of Jewish service men who have applied for permission to marry German girls is not wholly without significance, although some would attribute purely opportunistic motives to the girls. It has become proverbial in denazification trials that every defendant Nazi can produce at least one letter from a Jewish refugee testifying that he (the Nazi) had proved a friend in need during the time of persecution. I have had to read too many such letters written by Jews in the past three years from all over the world, to believe that all Germans, not to mention all Nazis, possessed a bestial hatred of Jews, now or during the Third Reich.

This does not, of course, mitigate the unspeakable crimes perpetrated against the Jews by the German Nazi government, for which the German people bear responsibility, nor does it explain away the anti-Semitic feelings in Germany now. It is, however, a denial that such feelings are (or were) common to the whole population or even to a majority.

Moreover, such statements as the following I find indefensible: "Thousands of war criminals and murderers of Jews are living in Germany, free and undisturbed; none of them is ever caught, except when accidentally recognized by a victim." Few of us would defend the job our occupation officials have done in its entirety, but, on the other hand, few objective observers will claim that they have been negligent in searching out and punishing war criminals and murderers of Jews.

The article breathes a hatred and bitterness which are easily understandable, but which

play havoc with the writer's attempt to give an objective picture of the German situation.

J. GLENN GRAY

Haverford, Pennsylvania

The Communist Problem

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

My interest in Mr. Bendiner's "Civil Liberties and the Communists" (in the May COMMENTARY) was not entirely objective, since I myself wrote along Bendiner-Ernst lines almost ten years ago. However, from my then-revised libertarian premises I drew certain conclusions whose necessity Mr. Bendiner, as well as our other "re-evaluating" liberals, still fails to recognize. Among these was one conceiving the possibility that situations might arise which a mere "disclosure" plan could not cope with effectively. In that case complete illegalization would be logically indicated.

Such a conclusion is inescapable even on the basis of Mr. Bendiner's own examples. Suppose fascists and Communists do "register" their membership, financial sources, etc., but *continue* to "stir up racial antagonisms" and attack the "security and dignity" of individuals and groups. What then? Furthermore, there was nothing *secretive* about the Nazis to whom the "Weimar Republic presented its head." Neither is there anything so "devious" and elusive about our Communists that a law for suppression—if necessary—could not deal with. They may change their party's name, but any group which persistently defends the policies of the Soviet Union is Communist—no matter what its title.

JAMES BARRETT

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Fraternities: Two Views

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Carey McWilliams' article "Equality or Fraternities?" in the May COMMENTARY seems to me to deserve comment. I was very much amazed and perturbed by Mr. McWilliams' narrow and biased point of view. Of course, there are abuses . . . but the fraternities themselves are attempting to reduce them. . . .

Since the conclusion of World War II, many of the restrictions of the old fraternities as to race, color, or creed have been removed. The large number of recently formed fraternities are without any discriminatory practices. Several college fraternities have even been founded for the express purpose of fighting these prejudices. Perhaps fraternities today might actually show less prejudice than clubs, unions, or even nations. . . .

It is true that a student may not always become a brother in the fraternity of his first choice. Neither may an electrician become a member of the American Medical Association. There is, however, a fraternity for every college student. . . .

Mr. McWilliams fails to recognize the benefits of the fraternity. Fraternity brothers aid each other in solving school problems. . . . Fraternities promote understanding among neighbors and colleagues. Fraternities offer opportunities for self-government, and prepare the student for active participation in national and international governments.

There is democracy in fraternities. Any brother who has completed his pledge period may run for office. Fraternities offer an extracurricular tie between the student and the university. In a non-campus college this tie is very welcome. It brings about a devotion to the school which normally would not exist. All these values certainly do *not* remove equality from fraternal existence.

If Mr. McWilliams wishes to fight for equality, I think it would be wise for him to fight for the fraternalism of all mankind. We who are active in fraternity life at City College will join him in that fight.

RALPH A. MESSING
President

Interfraternity Council
The City College of New York

[Note: Mr. McWilliams' article stated that a number of fraternities have recently abandoned policies of discrimination, and that many new fraternities have been formed without discriminatory rules.—Ed.]

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a former national chancellor of a Greek letter fraternity, I have a special background for appreciating the merit of Carey McWilliams' excellent article, "Equality or Fraternities?" I wholeheartedly support Mr. McWilliams' thesis, and I wish you could make a reprint of the article for every president of a national fraternity, and circularize the National Interfraternity Conference with it.

I also would suggest that if you possibly can, you send reprints to directors of various religious foundations that do local campus work. I can visualize, as a former national youth director for the Unitarian church, a thousand magnificent "bull sessions" on the article. . . .

Congratulations on COMMENTARY. You are doing a splendid piece of work.

STEPHEN H. FRITCHMAN
Minister

First Unitarian Church
Los Angeles, California

BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Quick and the Dead

ASHES AND FIRE. By JACOB PAT. Translated by Leo Steinberg. New York, International Universities Press, 1947. 254 pp. \$3.25.

Reviewed by HAL LEHRMAN

ANYONE who has visited a DP camp or a salvaged Jewish community in Eastern Europe will recall the macabre eagerness of its inhabitants to talk about their escape from butchery—as if the constant retelling of their story could somehow mellow the anguish through remembrance or, by sharing it with others, reduce the horrible to the normal. For his two-month tour of post-liberation Poland, the Yiddish writer Jacob Pat came equipped with a nimbler pencil than most, a larger notebook, a greater capacity for patient listening, and a sure instinct for selecting the human essentials from each saga of inhumanity. *Ashes and Fire* will endure as a documentary monument to the murdered Jews of Poland and to those who emerged alive, “every one of them a miracle of survival.” Fortified in English by a distinguished translation, the book deserves to endure also as a classic in the universal literature of martyrdom.

With fine economy, Pat contrives to narrate the chronicle of Jewry's extermination by a series of glimpses at the carnage, all the more effective because he knows how to tell everything in a few paragraphs, even a few words.

“We were stripped and tied down and exposed to packs of bloodhounds,” one Jew says to him. “Huge German dogs they were. They would rise up on their hind legs, look right into our faces, and then bite—silently.” As twilight falls over Oswiecim, and Pat approaches the ruins of the crematorium, shadowy figures scurry from the vast gray fields of Jewish ashes and bones, where Polish “gold-diggers” still prospect for gold teeth, gold

coins, gold watches, gold wedding rings. Taking notes on the physiology of massacre, he records the expert testimony of a Jewish observer that “children die more slowly than adults when they are shot; it's because their blood circulates faster; many of them were still squirming when buried.” Another informs him casually that “women burn better than men; the Germans used them as kindling wood, placing them strategically among the corpses they wanted to burn; they are supposed to have more fat under the skin.” In the great square of Bialystok, his birthplace (which he reached on a mad dash by motor through “bandit” country, while nearby seventy members of the anti-Communist “Patriots' Army” were hauling four Jews off a Bialystok train, robbing them, and abandoning them naked), Pat stands and “almost roars with laughter at the sheer absurdity” of the desolation: the famous clock tower, the busy stores, the factories filled with Jewish weavers and spinners—all vanished. “Where once stretched street after street, I can actually see the forest creeping up.... Once there was a mighty city—one day it disappeared....” But in Chenstokhov, where forty thousand Jews perished, the church steps over which they were driven and shot have been satisfactorily washed; “inside, candelabras and tall candles diffuse a gentle light.” In the synagogue at Lodz, when the time comes for Kaddish, not two or three but the whole congregation rises, because every man has some one for whom he must say Kaddish. Outside, the little Jewish children romp and sing: “O, my name is Israel, and I am running wild. And O, my name is Israel, I am the ghetto's child. They've killed my friends, they've killed my kin, the ghetto's mine to whistle in.” And in Lublin, children like these dance delightedly around a venerable old Jew in the street, crying “Look! A grandpa!” and pointing to his long, silky beard, because it is a long time since they have seen a beard, and there are very few Jewish grandfathers left in Poland. And in Tarnov Pat hears how a doomed

father and son at the Maidanek death camp, having only one piece of rope between them, agreed that the father should hang himself first, after which the son cut him down and used the same rope over again as a noose for himself.

MANY chose to fight rather than make a meek exit, or at least to sell their lives for the lives of a few of their assassins. *Ashes and Fire* confirms with fresh detail the already well-authenticated fact that the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto and the partisan forests merit a chapter all their own in the epic of hopeless resistance which the world has been writing since Thermopylae. There were some Jews, too, who fought another kind of fight, but just as effectively as those who died in blasts of fire in the bunkers and on the barricades—like the two hundred Jewish slave laborers who sang lustily on their way from work in order to keep the guards from hearing the whimpers of the little children being smuggled in the workers' bread baskets to places of security. There were others, unable to give blow for blow, who demonstrated their valor merely by the incredible intensity of their will to survive. In Warsaw, Pat saw the stone block on which Jews broke their own legs to save themselves from the charnel houses. In the Jewish cemetery of Chentshin, a Jewess made an underground grave whose floor and walls and ceiling were tombstones, and lived there more than a year with the rats and the dead so that her little girl might live. When Germany fell, a pious Hasid lay dying in Oswiecim. "In my fever," he tells Pat, "I saw the others creeping up to snatch my piece of bread. 'He's dead,' I heard one say. That's when I pulled myself together. 'No, I'm not dead,' I cried. 'Give me my bread!'"

And there were the Jews of non-Jewish aspect, with the "safe faces," the false Gentile names, the faked identity papers, who fought in their own good way by outwitting a whole army. They were the ones who perfected their parts as priests, nuns, peasants, beggars, woodsmen, and other inviolate "Aryans." "We were all play actors," they tell Pat, "and whoever didn't act well enough, died."

It was not only before the Gestapo and the SS and the Wehrmacht that these performers had to keep perpetually vigilant. The "million-headed enemy," alert to "recognize the Jew and have him destroyed," was also recruited from the incurably anti-Semitic Polish masses.

Pat searches diligently and finds a handful of good Poles—some who (usually for a price) gave the hunted Jew a temporary shelter; a few who fought nobly by the side of their Jewish comrades; a saintly Christian lady whose sublime compassion led her, at her peril, to pick up the corpse of an anonymous Jew where the police had thrown it into a gutter, and dig a grave for it, because, as she said, "he looked so lonely in his dying."

But the proof is that even those rare Poles who were kind to Jews have themselves become objects of reprisal by their countrymen for the sin of mercy. The Bialystok Jewish Committee is now supporting persecuted Christian families which befriended Jews—"so far, one man has been shot and a woman has had her tongue cut out." In the days of the Nazis, it was the Poles who were quickest to detect and inform against the disguised Jew. "When you sit among Gentiles, never forget that you mustn't sigh. They will know you at once. They will stop in mid-laughter at a Jewish *oi*." It was the Poles, not their German conquerors, who knew the Jews most readily. "Just look at their melancholy eyes," the Poles used to say. Or else—"he's too smart, he must be Jewish." When he escaped from the ghetto, Pat's chauffeur recalls, "I found two hundred thousand Gentile doors—and every one of them banged shut in my face." Even in the Warsaw uprising, certain anti-Nazi Polish units refused to enroll Jews, saying "Poland will win without the Jews." And in the Zamosht forest, toward the end, a survivor discloses, "the Polish partisans, with whom we shared the forest, got orders to liquidate their Jewish comrades because post-war Poland would be better off without us." As he watches a pitifully scant Jewish demonstration for Palestine in the streets of "liberated" Lodz, Pat hears a Pole beside him mutter: "So many Jews—dog's blood!" The "Patriots" again are sending expulsion warnings and death notices to returning Jews. Jewish children are still running home beaten and bloody from their Polish schoolrooms.

PAT knows, moreover, that in latter-day "democratic" Poland there has been no miraculous blaze of enlightenment, and he wisely refrains from blackening one side or whitewashing the other on the present Polish political scene. He observes that Socialists and Communists, "for tactical reasons," failed to denounce a

threatened pogrom in Tarnov, and that the chief of the government's Security Police there was a notorious Jew-baiter, a member of the Endek, Poland's pre-war fascist party. Pat is not misled by formal government disapproval of anti-Semitism, or even by Warsaw's financial aid to Jewish institutions. He consults with Communist Premier Osobka-Moravsky and with Opposition Leader Mikolajczyk, and from each he obtains the "explanation" that the other's faction—and not the innocent Polish masses—is to blame for continued excesses against the Jews. He draws the sound conclusion, on the basis of the evidence of his eyes and ears, that "the Polish people as such is rotten with anti-Semitism."

Why, then, do Jews remain in Poland? Why do they build in Poland? Why do they return from Russia? Pat himself asks these questions of the Polish Jews.

About Russia they tell him that every one of them has rejected Soviet citizenship—every one of them is coming back: "It's not so much that they want to return to Poland, as that they want to get out of Russia. We found no Jewish life in Russia. . . . All over Russia books were being ripped up for cigarette paper; morality counts for so little; man counts for so little. . . ."

In Poland, thirty new cooperatives of Jewish artisans have arisen, and Jewish communities have been reconstructed from the embers of thirty Polish cities. Only in Silesia, however, only in the territories taken from the Germans, is resettlement progressing without the shadow of Polish hate. But, Pat asks, who knows how long? This is "German soil on which a foreign government has settled Jews who are not masters of their fate. What will happen if the present scaffolding of peace collapses and German avengers pour back into Silesia to find the Jews?"

Why do the Jews build? Why do the upholsterers of the Lodz cooperative continue to fix springs in mattresses? "We also repair the springs inside ourselves." The tanners and the bakers carry on at their labors in Chenshtokhov because "we'd go insane, just sitting on packed trunks and waiting." But in Poland, say the Jews, "you can smell the ships." The ships to Palestine? To America? To anywhere. "What would Poland's eighty thousand Jews do if they were presented with eighty thousand certificates for Palestine?" Pat asks himself at the end of his journey. "They would have

themselves shipped to Palestine with the least possible delay. What would they do if they were given eighty thousand visas to America? They would sail for America with the least possible delay." Just as everywhere else in Russia's Europe, the Jews of Poland ask only for the way out. Meanwhile they mark time, on the edge of a precipice.

Underside of the War

THE NAKED AND THE DEAD. By NORMAN MAILER. New York, Rinehart, 1948. 721 pp. \$4.00.

Reviewed by RAYMOND ROSENTHAL

NORMAN MAILER's novel about the war in the South Pacific can be regarded as the inevitable reaction to the pallid, neatly trimmed literary commodities turned out by the graduates of *Yank*, *Stars and Stripes*, and the OWI. It is the explosion of the army's underside, the sewer of hostility and fear and petty annoyance and boredom that until now has been either covered up by banalities or avoided altogether. For the first time we have a record of the dirty, hard business that the Second World War was for the combat soldier. And what a record! Mailer is hardly the great war novelist, indeed in the final accounting his limitations bulk larger than his accomplishments, yet his detonating outburst, huge, acrid, and raspily uncouth, comes as a relief—a whiff of the actual—after the pussyfooting of his contemporaries.

It is a curious sociological fact that, until Mailer wrote his book, the conduct of the recent war as described by the run of war novels seemed no more productive of unpleasantness than the outings of a normally ill-behaved boys' club. And although Mailer sees little else but war's melodramatic miseries, his perspective brings him closer to the combat reality than that of such novels as Harry Brown's *A Walk in the Sun* and John Hersey's *A Bell for Adano*. An opaque screen stood between these other writers and the reality of the war experience; and it was the screen itself, constructed chiefly out of the myth that they themselves were busy creating on their various journalistic and propagandistic jobs, that got transcribed into their books. One encounters in this book not another version of the same experience, but a wholly new order of actuality.

What explains such a persistent and pene-

trating social myopia? Is it merely that Mailer is a skillful craftsman and that Brown and Hersey and many others are inept ones? I think not. The explanation is far simpler and more concrete: all these writers ducked the reality because they are deeply conventional, responding to the dominant view with a sensitivity that real artists reserve for their own feelings. They are equipped with receptivity to the current mores as other writers have a flair for dialogue or a talent for scenic description; in fact, it is their sole asset and accounts entirely for their popularity.

Of course, the barely hidden armature of their books was the convention of war fixed by a previous generation's experience of it. But what had been a revolt and a fresh vision in the First World War became a glib and slick formula to the journalist-novelists of the second. Everyone who knows Hemingway knows the British-derived stereotype: war is hell; all soldiers are forced to be cowardly heroes or hero-like cowards; big words like duty and honor and sacrifice are phony, and only silent, efficient action counts; combat is a vile affair but it does establish, unlike civilian life, an intimate and bitter camaraderie—and so on.

NORMAN MAILER has broken *that* mold. What he tells us is scarcely news, but it has the value of the authentic inflection, the undeniably accurate feel and shape of what happened, and not the echo of other books about other wars. Compare the obscene talk of Mailer's soldiers with the polished wisecracks dished up by the others, compare his vision of the army's set-up—that "ladder of fear," as he calls it—with the compliant picture of an unthinking, unfeeling, automaton-like "chain of command" that Harry Brown describes—and one is struck by the extent of the falsification that Mailer has rejected.

But Mailer has his own borrowings and his own conventions—Dos Passos and Farrell seem to be his chief literary influences—and by and large these stand in the way of his native ability to tell a story and depict a character. His main error was to cast his novel in the mass-novel form, and I think that this was due to his copying of the Dos Passos of *U.S.A.* Actually, however, his novel deals with as close a group of characters as *Wuthering Heights*, and suffers from the added machinery of choruses and flashbacks.

The only excuse Mailer has for his mass-novel structure is his shuttlings between the

fortunes of his platoon, at the bottom, and the "big brass" of division headquarters, at the summit. The latter milieu is portrayed in the main through the pathological relationship that exists between a shrewd, inverted, brilliant, fascist-minded general and his weak, neurotic, intellectual, half-liberal-minded aide (the adjectives are Mailer's). The novel hits its lowest points in these episodes. Completely unbelievable as a character, such a general might well have existed in the American army, yet he is but a pale montage of second-hand opinions ("The role of 20th century man is anxiety," he learnedly quotes) in Mailer's conception of him. In contrast, when Mailer writes of a soldier bellyaching he is not content to leave the work to the reader's imagination; instead, he functions as a real novelist, selecting that piling series of indignities and frustrations—those cruel straps of a full pack, those undefined and subterranean tensions among men who know each other too long and too well, those capricious movements of hostility and aggression that stream like electrical currents through a platoon on a tough assignment—that wrings out the real, distinguished gripe.

Yet it is in struggles, ideological and personal, between the general and his aide that the novel's central theme is given its most explicit expression. War, Mailer appears to think, is made by evil, sadistic men, who might happen to be sergeants like Croft or generals like Cummings. Men like these provide the motor power that drives the war-making machine; the others—the fools, the sentimentalists, the good, the honest, and the brave—are lashed ahead by these demoniac taskmasters. Thus Mailer's novel soon parts company with modern literature, taking its place, along with the novels of his contemporaries, on the academic shelf. Only this is the shelf of naturalism, now stamped in its up-to-date form by heavy lacings of sex and free-and-easy psychoanalytical readings into every motive and response. Indeed, the novel's very virtue—its method of straightforwardness and carefully observed detail—proves to be a contribution to its ultimate failure, since even the flaccid ideas of naturalistic fiction force its practitioners to adopt a certain logic. Naturalism, it has often been observed, is the perfect medium for the portrayal of victims and misfortune, and Mailer's often brilliant revelation of the goaded, brutalized soldier's existence is testimony to this. But when he attempts to encompass the war in its emotional and moral

complexity he wanders off into the vague wilderness of politics and gets lost.

CONTRARY to Mailer's view, the experience of the recent war does not divide neatly into two camps: the duality of victim and victimizer lies within each one of us—and this is what must be explored before the meaning of the war will come clearly before us. For this reason even so schematic a novel as Albert Camus' *The Stranger*—a "war" novel, too—evokes a stronger response from us than the graphic catalogue of hardship and despair that Mailer recounts at great length. Intent on an easy and embracing political explanation for the disorder, Mailer shirks his duty as a novelist, which is to turn his back on all such "explanations."

Kenneth Burke once brilliantly argued that a depiction of war's brutalities might give rise to more militarism than was bargained for; Burke could see the recruit of a future war pointing to the photographs of a past war's mutilation and terror, and saying with quiet courage to his girl friend: "Look at those! That's what war is like. Dearie, today I enlisted!" In short, an "aesthetic barrage" composed of the wildest images of military disorder has often prepared the way for an enhancement of notions of heroism. It is doubtful that Mailer's book, which is full of terrors and mutilations but is weak in conception, will rouse anyone against militarism. The reverse effect is just as likely: the thousands of bored veterans might find in the bombardments, the skirmishes, and the patrol behind enemy lines the final fillip to their jaded, civilian urge toward a renewal of the romance of the simple issue and the unmitigated experience. On the other hand, the novel that concerns itself with the bare and obsessive problem of war's tangled morality will, I am afraid, continue to be unimpressive to the mass of humanity.

A word more should be said about Mailer's style: it is terrible, and, outside of the creative reporting of soldiers' speech, he achieves all his triumphs of narration and characterization in spite of it. The English critic V. S. Pritchett recently said that writers did not learn how to write badly all at once, they had to work hard at it. There's no doubt that Mailer has worked hard. Here, for example, is the general musing in his tent: "All the deep dark urges of men, the sacrifices on the hill top, and the churning lusts of the night and sleep, weren't all of them contained in the

shattering screaming burst of a shell, the man-made thunder and light? . . . All of it, all the violence, the dark coordination had sprung from his mind."

This ornately awkward, muscle-bound prose, so unsuited for any human modulation, be it a whisper or a shout, is not hard to trace: Mailer is writing out of the accumulated officialese of his generation, it is the prose of the NRA, the WPA, the agit-prop theatre, the sociological tracts, the bad novels, the corny articles, the editorials in *PM*, the army's manuals and reports. Along with all the other blights visited on our war-and-depression generation, this, too, has been in some way imposed on all of us by our very history—but Mailer has swallowed more than his share of the collective alphabet soup.

The Arab Economy

LAND AND POVERTY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

By DOREEN WARRINER. London, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1948.

148 pp. 7/6.

Reviewed by GEORGE LICHTHEIM

"NEAR starvation, pestilence, high death rates, soil erosion, economic exploitation—this is the pattern of life for the mass of the rural population in the Middle East. It is a poverty which has no parallel in Europe, since even clean water is a luxury. Money incomes are low—5 to 7 pounds per head per year—but money comparisons alone do not convey the filth and disease, the mud-huts shared with animals, the dried dung fuel. There is no standard of living in the European sense—mere existence is accepted as a standard."

A description of the Middle East in these stark terms has long been lacking in the compendious literature produced under semi-official British auspices. Not that the facts were unknown, but they commonly appear as "background" to the comings and goings on the political scene. The war made a change in this approach because the new nationalist movements began to reflect middle-class discontent with conditions vaguely associated with foreign control. At the same time sheer necessity compelled the Allies to "plan" at least the food supplies of the region, as when they forced the Egyptian cotton-growers to turn

over part of their profitable plantations to the less remunerative but more useful production of grain. Miss Warriner herself worked in the Middle East Supply Centre, where her previously acquired knowledge of agrarian problems in Eastern Europe helped her to understand the urgent necessity of a new deal for the Middle Eastern farmer. The result is an authoritative survey of the region's farming problems, coupled with some shrewd and incisive criticism of the policies pursued by the British and French mandatory authorities during the inter-war period: policies which, it is clear, have on the whole tended to make matters worse for the cultivator and to concentrate even more power in the hands of the landlords.

Since it is that class which stands in the way of technical progress, the conclusion is evident. The book indeed culminates in the statement that without a reform of land tenure—particularly in Egypt, Syria and Iraq—there can be no real advance. At the same time it warns that the Middle East is not, and never will be, a region favorable to grain-growing, and that irrigation requires an investment of capital far beyond the capacities of the countries concerned. It is this fact above all which makes some form of foreign economic control inevitable, unless the oil royalties are utilized to pay for the larger part of the investment—which in turn demands a radical change in the social composition of the ruling groups. Thus at every step seemingly technical problems—soil erosion, overpopulation, rural indebtedness, lack of equipment, etc.—turn out to involve social changes which the Western powers have hitherto hindered rather than helped. Whether it is a question of providing a land outlet for Egypt's surplus population—Miss Warriner would like to settle two million Egyptian peasants in Iraq—or of preventing absentee landlords in Syria and Iraq from acquiring a stranglehold over the peasants under the guise of helping them pay for irrigation of their lands, the upshot of her investigation is always the same: the present system of land tenure must be radically changed and the grip of the landlords broken. The Lebanon and Palestine are partial exceptions: the former because small peasant proprietorship is widespread, the latter because of the relative wealth in capital equipment brought about by Jewish immigration.

There are flaws in her analysis of the

Palestine situation, but they are not of the sort commonly associated with the official and unofficial apologists of the mandatory regime.

WHERE Zionists will quarrel with Miss Warriner is in her ambivalent attitude towards the problem of capital investment for non-economic purposes. It is of course true and important that the Jordan Valley scheme is uneconomic in the sense that it cannot yield dividends to the investors; it is equally true, and more important, that it depends on political decisions and necessitates some degree of Arab cooperation. But to say that the same amount of money "if expended on irrigation in other Middle East territories . . . would make far larger areas productive" is to forget that these larger areas are in their present state precisely because their exploitation is governed exclusively by cost calculations, and that the Zionist experiment has flourished in proportion as it has been inspired by long-range planning.

This is sometimes recognized by the author, but her friendly references to the agricultural work so far accomplished in Palestine are qualified by what appears an excessive scepticism as to its scope. There is a real problem involved in the existence of two parallel markets, two communities with totally different standards of living, two ways of life; but while Zionist writers have undoubtedly exaggerated the beneficial effect of Jewish settlement on the Arab village, Miss Warriner seems unduly inclined to assume that costs in the Jewish sector will always remain so high as to isolate the Jewish settlements from their Arab neighbors.

It also seems unfair to describe the life of the communal farms as "an echo of Weimar Germany," and to dismiss as "very unreal" a "socialism so heavily subsidized, which does not contribute directly to raise the level of surrounding poverty." Actually the communal settlements have in some respects proved the most economic form of farming so far undertaken by Jews. Their impact on the Arab economy must necessarily be long-range. Miss Warriner is on safer ground when she shows that the problem of rural overpopulation in the Arab sector must remain insoluble without some degree of industrialization even if the Jordan Valley scheme is put into effect.

This is an important and well-documented book whose lesson the political experts dealing with the Middle East will be wise to absorb—if there is still time.

The Liberal Novel

CONSPIRATOR. By HUMPHREY SLATER.
New York; Harcourt, Brace, 1948.
184 pp. \$2.50.

THE BLACK LAUREL. By STORM JAMESON.
New York, Macmillan, 1948.
338 pp. \$3.00.

Reviewed by HEINZ POLITZER

LIBERALISM, as a creative force, has not recovered from the shocks it suffered during the war and its aftermath. The emergence of another totalitarian threat hard on the heels of the vanquished Nazis has deeply shaken its self-confidence. "The center cannot hold . . ." W. B. Yeats had prophesied, "the best lack all conviction. . . ."

Still on the defensive, the liberal writer has found neither the time nor the resources to balance his work. He still sacrifices the end to the means and art to propaganda.

Humphrey Slater's new novel offers the portrait of a young man as a totalitarian agent. It starts off by relating, in a kind of frozen Waugh-cum-Flaubert style, the love story and honeymoon of an English upper-class couple. These first fifty pages of a rather short book seem a serious attempt to set the stage for a contemporary family conflict. Then, all of a sudden, the love story splits into a character study and a thriller. Desmond Ferneaux-Lightfoot, a major in the Grenadier Guards, is a Communist fifth columnist. His wife discovers his conspiratorial activities, whereupon his Russian employers order him to "liquidate" her. A nervous breakdown frustrates his attempt on the life of the person whom he had passionately loved until a short while ago. Desmond is neither a maniac nor a congenital criminal; he is only the handy-man of revolution. Spiritually, he has been molded by the doctrine of crisis and his political creed has taken on a pseudo-religious pathos that contains contempt as well as despair. Like Kierkegaard's God, the almighty and omnipresent Party is entitled to ask inhuman, paradoxical, and self-destructive deeds of Party-Member Abraham, who will obey and praise the Lord. After having found out that the Party has decided upon his own liquidation by betraying him to the British government, Desmond muses: "There was no dif-

ference in effect between his giving his life in revolutionary action and his concurring in a Party decision decreeing his death for whatever reason. He smiled grimly and thought with pride that all the same it took someone with a lot of Bolshevik guts to be able to see it in that light. . . ."

As a biographical sketch Desmond Ferneaux-Lightfoot is cogent enough; as the central figure in a novel he falls hopelessly flat. Plasticity in fiction is only to be gained by firmly establishing and preserving a distance between the author and his characters. The scale, the degree, of distance is determined by the relevance of the figures to the plot—not to the author, who must behave like a demiurge: impartial and hidden. Any bias on his part upsets the equilibrium of his structure, strips his characters of importance, and deprives his message of urgency.

WHEREAS Humphrey Slater lets his dislikes interfere with his art for good and clear intellectual, if not good aesthetic reasons, Storm Jameson's novel falls victim to antipathies of whose origin and even existence the author does not seem to be aware.

In *Black Laurel* she explores the vacuum hovering over the chaos that is present-day Germany. Using Arnold Zweig's method in *Sergeant Grisha*, she reveals the ambitions and deficiencies of her key figures by chronicling their reactions to the imprisonment and decapitation of a man whom most of them know to be innocent. His name is Heinrich Kalb; he is an art expert by profession; he is a German Jew returned from London after the expiration of Hitler's Thousand Years. His principal and almost exclusive virtue is inconspicuousness, but this does not prevent him from being snubbed by almost everybody he meets on German soil, British and German alike. The novel introduces him in the act of being knocked over by an Englishman: "It was exactly like knocking over a man-sized insect, his arms made the same stick-like gestures. . . ." And finally Heinrich is knocked over by an executioner's axe. If his last outcry—"There are no victims!"—makes any sense at all, it must mean that he replies only with self-hatred to the hostility everybody in this book—and the author herself—seems to feel toward him.

A unique opportunity for giving shape to a unique situation involving conflict and ambivalence has patently been missed here. The ruined cities and gutted cathedrals of Germany

might have hurt Heinrich's aesthete's eyes, while at the same time filling him with the somber sense of a triumph that was ashamed of itself. To be allowed to speak his mother's tongue again might, or might not, have compensated him for the shock of shaking the very hands that had remained inert when his mother was being sent off to the gas chambers. In short, he might have become the up-to-date and Jewish version of that eternal figure, the *ci-devant*, historical brother of the legendary Lost Son.

INSTEAD, the character Storm Jameson has created reveals little more than the author's own unresolved conflicts. Miss Jameson may have felt called upon to contribute her share to the discussion of the Jewish problem, but, like Rebecca West and many another English middle-class liberal, she touches upon it only as one touches an itching spot on one's skin. She exposes it to view, takes a look at it—and then shrinks back as if afraid of herself. That she should have to have Herr Heinrich killed off is a confession of her profound helplessness in the face of him and his like.

Liberals like Miss Jameson do not feel that they have of their own accord chosen the Jewish problem as a subject for discussion. Nor has history imposed it upon them as their own particular concern, as it has imposed upon them the German question or, for that matter, the Russian one. They simply ran into the problem when they met drab and haggard Jewish refugees in London after 1933 and in the displaced persons' camps on the continent after 1945. British fascism keeps reminding them of it and so does Palestine.

The problem is there, it is on their hands, and they try to accept the challenge. Thus Miss Jameson does her best to like Herr Heinrich and to explore his plight. But since she has neither the knowledge necessary to understand his history nor the genuine love to perceive the very essence of his being, she has recourse only to the cliché. Significantly enough, she does not fit her Jew into the pattern offered her by tolerance and enlightenment, pale and dated as that might be. She conjures up, instead, the shadow of the Eternal Jew, that time-honored nightmare whom she wraps in the threadbare coat of progressive decency. A nightmare it is—and Miss Jameson behaves in the end like the child who meets a ghost. She runs away from it.

Church and State

RELIGION IN PUBLIC EDUCATION. By V. T. THAYER. New York, Viking Press, 1947. 212 pp. \$2.75.

THE CHURCH AS EDUCATOR. By CONRAD H. MOEHLMAN. New York; Hinds Hayden and Eldredge, 1947. 184 pp. \$2.00.

RENDER UNTO THE PEOPLE. By UMPHREY LEE. New York and Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. 164 pp. \$1.50.

THE FIRST FREEDOM: CONSIDERATIONS ON CHURCH AND STATE IN THE UNITED STATES. By WILFRID PARSONS. New York, Declan X. McMullen Company, 1948. 178 pp. \$2.25.

Reviewed by MILTON R. KONVITZ

THREE of these four authors are in agreement that in the United States church and state must remain separate. All Americans, except Catholics and some Protestants (perhaps chiefly Lutherans affiliated with the Missouri Synod), avow belief in the principle of separation. The differences in opinion come to the fore when questions are asked as to its meaning, scope, and limits. Dr. Humphrey Lee, president of the Southern Methodist University, takes the familiar position that while the Constitution prohibits the establishment of a church, it does not prohibit friendly assistance to religious bodies. This position might be called the "separate but equal aid" doctrine—separate church and state, but state aid to all churches equally. Following the argument of William Clayton Bower (*Church and State in Education*), Dr. Lee believes that while sectarianism must be excluded from the public schools, courses in non-sectarian religion could be offered without offense to the religious scruples of children and parents and with profit to the morals and souls of all concerned. Although the reviewer is opposed to these conclusions, he was favorably impressed with the book's moderate tone, scholarship, and quiet sincerity.

Father Parsons' book presents the Catholic position, bears the *imprimatur* of the Arch-

bishop of Washington, and has a foreword by the Archbishop of Baltimore. The author is opposed to the principle of separation; in its place he would substitute "distinction and co-operation"—state and church, while distinct, should cooperate freely. The state should pay for the secular, as distinct from the religious, education afforded by parochial schools. The Justices of the United States Supreme Court (except Mr. Justice Reed), in speaking of a "high and impregnable . . . wall of separation between church and state," have departed from firm constitutional principles and wise policy. Father Parsons appeals to non-Catholic citizens to join the fight against the doctrine of separation. Father Parsons states the Catholic case without euphemism, circumlocution, or evasion. While the reviewer has serious questions concerning the historical, constitutional, and policy arguments offered by Father Parsons, he recommends the book as the best-balanced Catholic brief against separation that he has read.

The other two authors maintain that the principle of separation means an absolute prohibition upon state assistance, direct or indirect, financial or moral, to religious bodies. Dr. Thayer, for many years associated prominently with the Ethical Culture movement, has consistently fought against church influence or infiltration in the public schools. His book is a useful statement. Professor Moehlman's stand is on the same ground. His *School and Church: the American Way*, published in 1944, should be read together with his new book, *The Church as Educator*, for a fairly complete historical statement of the principle of separation and an effective argument against attempts to dilute the principle so that it will mean friendly assistance by federal and state governments to all religious bodies, especially to the religious education programs of sectarian groups.

Books such as these by Moehlman and Thayer ought to be widely read, for clerical interests are hungry for funds and are pushing their campaign for state aid to religious education on all fronts. Proposed federal aid to equalize state expenditures for education serves as the center of the campaign to secure public funds for sectarian schools. The 10,000 Catholic parochial schools, with an enrollment of 2,400,000 pupils, constitute an onerous financial burden. No Catholic principle stands in the way of accepting relief from the public

treasury for all or a part of the cost. The released time plan in operation in 1800 communities in 47 states has an enrollment of 1,500,000 children. Transportation of parochial pupils at public expense has been authorized in some states. Church hospitals and orphanages are generally supported by public funds. In some communities the pupils in parochial schools receive textbooks purchased out of public funds. On all fronts churchmen are aggressively carrying the fight to win public financial support for the church schools, classes, and other activities. Those who, like Thayer and Moehlman, see the threat and danger in this militant campaign by clerics and their political friends, deserve very great credit for their efforts. To support the doctrine of absolute and unqualified separation means to lay oneself open to the charge that one is fighting against religion, morals, the home, etc.—it is so much easier when one can claim to have *both* God and the Constitution on one's side.

Since the books by Thayer and Moehlman deal chiefly with the place of religion in public education, they are especially significant today, because it is on the public school front that the lines of battle are being drawn. That their efforts, and those of others like Professors H. M. Kallen and Sidney Hook, have borne some fruit, is evident in the fact that organizations representing at least eighty per cent of American Jewry found it desirable and possible to join in a brief submitted to the United States Supreme Court attacking the constitutionality of the action of the school authorities in Champaign County, Illinois, in permitting the use of school buildings for sectarian education. The Synagogue Council of America, consulting its collective conscience, joined in this brief, supporting the position of an avowedly atheistical taxpayer. Such a step becomes possible only under a Constitution that leaves religion entirely to the conscience—and purse—of the individual citizen—believer, agnostic, or atheist; Jew or Christian; Catholic or Protestant. The principle of the privacy of the religious conscience can be eclipsed by government interference with or aid to churches or religious schools. To deny public aid to religious groups means, to this writer's mind, the protection of their independence and integrity, of the privacy of the individual's religious conscience, and of our free institutions from clerical domination.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

HAL LEHRMAN, a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, is the author of *Russia's Europe*.

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MILTON R. KONVITZ is director of research and associate professor at the New York State School of Industrial Labor Relations at Cornell University.

NOTE: The following books are reviewed in Oscar Handlin's article on page 79: *A Mask for Privilege*, by Carey McWilliams; *Conception Matérialiste de la Question Juive*, by A. Léon; *Caste, Class, and Race*, by O. C. Cox.

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